

Cosmopolitan



Beginning

Irvin S. Cobb's

Stories of a regular boy

"Goin' on Fourteen"

Peter B. Kyne Rupert Hughes

Kathleen Norris Arthur Somers Roche

George Ade W. Somerset Maugham H.C. Witwer

P. G. Wodehouse James Oliver Curwood

Gouverneur Morris O.O. McIntyre Frank R. Adams

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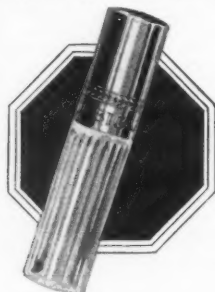
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COSMOPOLITAN

America's Greatest Magazine

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Next Month

IF you have ever felt a touch of the wanderlust,
you will want to read a story of the open
road and the lilt of a gypsy's song

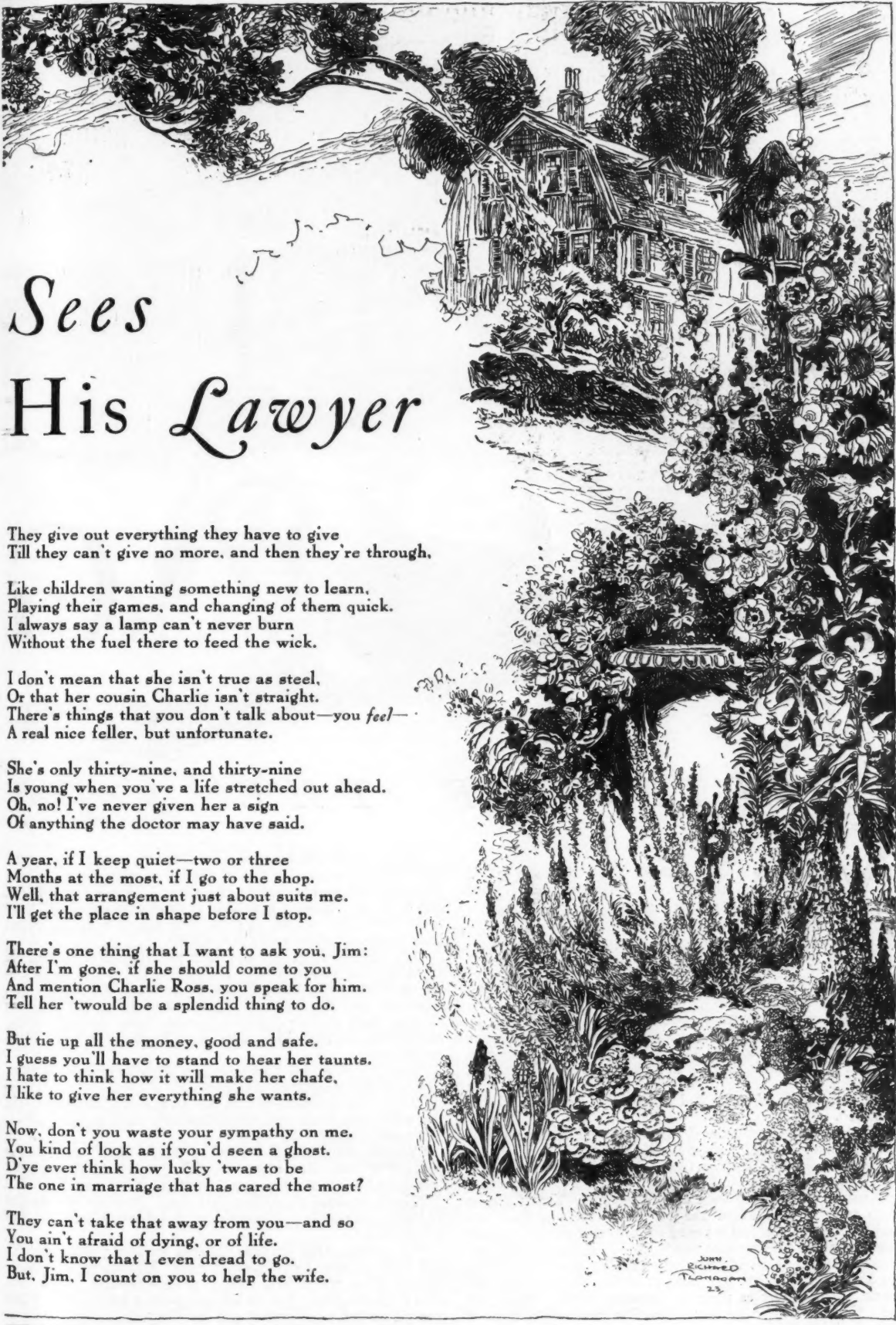
By

E D N A F E R B E R

Consider the Lilies

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Sees His Lawyer

They give out everything they have to give
Till they can't give no more, and then they're through.

Like children wanting something new to learn,
Playing their games, and changing of them quick.
I always say a lamp can't never burn
Without the fuel there to feed the wick.

I don't mean that she isn't true as steel,
Or that her cousin Charlie isn't straight.
There's things that you don't talk about—you feel—
A real nice feller, but unfortunate.

She's only thirty-nine, and thirty-nine
Is young when you've a life stretched out ahead.
Oh, no! I've never given her a sign
Of anything the doctor may have said.

A year, if I keep quiet—two or three
Months at the most, if I go to the shop.
Well, that arrangement just about suits me.
I'll get the place in shape before I stop.

There's one thing that I want to ask you, Jim:
After I'm gone, if she should come to you
And mention Charlie Ross, you speak for him.
Tell her 'twould be a splendid thing to do.

But tie up all the money, good and safe.
I guess you'll have to stand to hear her taunts.
I hate to think how it will make her chafe,
I like to give her everything she wants.

Now, don't you waste your sympathy on me.
You kind of look as if you'd seen a ghost.
D'ye ever think how lucky 'twas to be
The one in marriage that has cared the most?

They can't take that away from you—and so
You ain't afraid of dying, or of life.
I don't know that I even dread to go.
But, Jim, I count on you to help the wife.



G

The

STORIES OF THE SCOT

"MOM!" There was no answer. Yet there she sat, in plain view through the open door and, beyond question, within easy earshot.

"Mom—oh, mom! Say, mom, lissen, please'm?"

"I heard you the first time."

"Wellum, you didn't say 'Whut?' back to me. Mom, why didn't you say 'Whut?' if you heard me?"

"I'm busy, that's why. What is it you want now? And don't call me 'mom.'"

Her tone was quite matter-of-fact, indeed almost was an annoyed tone. That special deference which on the day before had marked it was quite lacking. How prone were grown persons and, in particular, parents to forget or to ignore events of importance.

The principal speaker fetched a little sigh and wriggled half out of bed.

"Mom—I mean mommer—I feel a little bit better now'n I did awhile ago. I think maybe I could git up."

"How often must I keep on telling you not to keep on saying 'git'? There's no such word as 'git.'"

"Yessum, there is too such a word as 'git.' That feller up North some'r's that killed the President—the one that was President when I was just a young child when I almost couldn't remember about it—his name was 'Gittow.' It wasn't 'Gettow.' It was 'Gittow.' Miss Ida Brazzel was tellin' about him killin' that President only just last week in hist'ry class and she said it was 'Gittow,' just as plain as anything, mom. Don't you s'pose that her bein' a teacher in the fifth grade she'd know, if anybody did, if there was such a word?"

Again no reply, but only an irritating silence.

18

"Mom, didn't you hear me whut I was sayin' to you a minute ago when you started in talkin' about somethin' else? I said I believed I felt well enough to git—get up. The hurtin' where I had it in my stomach is mighty near almost gone. And my finger don't hurt so bad, neither. The hurtin' only just comes back to the cut place once't in a while."

"Oh, well, then, get up and dress yourself. But stay in the yard; don't go wandering off. If you were too sick to go back to school today you're not well enough to leave the place. And, whatever you do, keep off of that new acting bar of yours. If you start turning yourself upside down on that acting bar there's no telling how soon you'll be back in bed. Now, remember!"

"Yessum. Well, kin I have my new birthday knife back, then, that you took away from me yistiddy?"

"There you go again—if I've told you once I must have told you a hundred times that there's no such word as 'kin,' either. The word is 'can.'"

"Yessum, there is such a word as 'kin.' Lissen, mom, I kin prove it to you. How about 'kin-folks,' mom? You don't say 'can-folks,' do you? You say 'kin-folks,' don't you?"

"That's because it's spelled that way. Nobody but darkies and common people pronounce a word differently from the way it is spelled."

"Oh, yessum, they do, too. There's grandpa. You wouldn't call him common people, would you? He always says 'Kintucky,' even when he's makin' a speech—I've heard him. And even you, mom, you do the same thing sometimes. When you git excited or somethin' you say 'Nostcha thing' when you mean 'No such of a thing,' and—"

"Nostcha thing!"



Illustrations by
Worth Brehm

oin' on Fourteen

First of IRVIN S. COBB'S

OF BOY HE WAS HIMSELF

"Why, mom, you just went and said it yourself. I said to you that you said it sometimes and you just started to say you didn't—and you did!"

The pestered woman rose up from where she sat and came to the door of the sick chamber. Voice and manner betokened a patience taxed almost to the breaking point.

"For Heaven's sake, John C. Calhoun Custer Junior, get up and put your clothes on and go on outdoors and give me a little peace! I declare I'm outdone with you. I don't know which is worse—having you asking a million questions a day, the way you used to do, or arguing by the hour, as you do now. To be forever arguing with older persons over something they don't know anything about is not becoming in children."

"Yessum. But say, mom, you ain't children any more if you're thirteen, goin' on fourteen—are you?" His mother had turned away. The invalid raised his voice, sending it after her retreating form: "Mom, are you?"

"Am I what?"

"Oh, nothin'." In this cross-maze of controversy one of the main issues was being lost sight of. "Mom, can't I please'm have my new knife back?"

"No, you can't have it back. That knife was given to you to enjoy and not to be cutting your fingers off. I'm not forgetting the fright you gave me yesterday when you came running in with your hand all covered with blood. I told you then that I'm not going to entrust you with that knife again until you've learned how to use it without hurting yourself."

"But, mom, how'm I ever goin' to learn how to use it if you don't let me have it back, so's I kin learn how to use it? You can't enjoy a knife much, I must say, if somebody else has went and put it away and won't even let you have it."

"John Custer, either you get up this minute and dress yourself or else you stay right where you are and keep quiet. If I hear another word out of you I think I'll scream. So make your choice, young man, and make it quick!"

There was finality in this utterly unreasonable woman's dictum. So the victim of her injustice made his choice. Under his breath he muttered to himself, as he fitted the buttons on the waistband of his "waist" into the buttonholes in the waistband of his "short pants."

Half an hour later he sat on the edge of the braced plank which confined the bed of sawdust beneath the new acting bar, with his morose face in his hands and his elbows on his knees; there he sat and reflected upon the impermanency of mortal pleasures. Only half an hour it had been, and yet to him it seemed that an immensely long period of time must have passed since he had come forth into the hot September sunshine. He had toured the yard, restlessly seeking occupation, and had found none.

Listlessly he had climbed up into the stable loft and still listlessly had presently descended. That dusty, hay-filled place which offered such possibilities when visited in congenial company—which was by turns a robbers' cave, a desert island, a Redskins' camp, a kidnapers' den—had revealed itself now as a lonesome and comfortless chamber, a fit abode for spiders and mice and for the stupid pigeons. He had made the rounds of the woodshed, the henhouse, the shed under which the cow stood in bad weather; all was monotony thrice compounded.

Upon a cross timber of the alley fence he came upon a disquieting spectacle. Here, in the week previous, he had placed a preserve jar snugly full of plump earthworms. It was of general belief in the circles in which he moved that if you thus exposed captive worms for a suitable period to the action of the sun's rays

they were resolved into "snake oil," and then, if with this magic property you anointed your limbs and body, immediately you grew incredibly limber in all your joints and shortly had mastery of every known feat of contortion. By common accounting, the boneless wonders and human frogs seen in circuses acquired and maintained their extraordinary suppleness through precisely these treatments.

But either these worms had been glassed for too long or for not long enough. He felt that he would not care to remove the screwed-on top of the canister, now or ever. Merely a look at the liquefying contents was sufficient to dissuade him from any lingering ambitions to be a human frog. It was more than sufficient. Anyhow, it had been several days since he had favorably considered such a career; more recently, the life of an Indian scout had appealed to him. He gagged, as hastily he withdrew from the vicinity of the entombed horrors.

But after a little he felt slightly better, that is to say, physically. Spiritually he continued to be at a low ebb. It hardly seemed possible that this body of his had been the earthly tenement, twenty-four hours before, of a soul so buoyant.

For yesterday, up to a certain hour, had been such a full and glorious day, such a whopper and a jim-dandy of a day. But today, how flat, stale and unprofitable!

Hunched on the narrow perch of the sawdust bed, he viewed the one which was past in the uninspiring light of the one which was present, and by contrast was made to realize the hollowness of human existence. Without being able to put tongue to the exact words which described the situation, he nevertheless realized the force of a majestic truth, voiced centuries before him and by a much older philosopher, to the effect that expectation is more precious than gratification. In short, Johnny Custer was bored. Not alone was he bored, but likewise he was introspective; or as introspective as persons of his age ever are.

Great days, he pessimistically reflected, had a way of going to pieces on a fellow. Take Christmas Day, now. The bottom always seemed to fall right out of it along about four or five o'clock in the evening, and long before bedtime it had turned out to be one of the longest days in the year, the contrary word of the calendar notwithstanding.

And birthdays, it would appear, likewise belied the anticipations with which a buoyant optimism wreathed them on the eve of their occurrence. But it did seem as though a fellow's thirteenth birthday, marking his advent into matured estate, should be different. It just naturally ought to be. In prospect it had loomed as a thing so tremendously significant, too. Two days before this he had said to himself, marveling at the impending transformation: "Tonight, when I go to bed I'll still be only just twelve years old. But in the mornin' when I wake up I'll be thirteen, goin' on fourteen—*hod zickerteel!*"

Lo, and the miracle had come to pass and already disillusionment and a deep debility possessed him. True, the anniversary had been auspiciously launched. There were, to begin with, presents—this acting bar, and that knife and a pair of solid silver cuff buttons—cuff buttons such as men wore, with a design of horses' heads raised on their surfaces, and with these last a promise that his next lot of "waists" would be finished, not with the turned-back wristbands of small boydom but with those desirable barrel-shaped terminals such as his father and other smartly dressed male adults had at their sleeve ends. Also, he had been accorded special and extraordinary considerations in honor of the day. He had not been required to go to school, and at dinner, to which he had been permitted to invite certain chosen friends, the dishes were of his own choosing.

Yet all the time disaster had been lurking, as it were, around the corner. First there had befallen the affair of the gashed forefinger. That wasn't so bad, though, once the first shock was over; the carrying of the maimed hand in bandages more than atoned for the pain. He had borne himself as some wounded warrior might, repeatedly directing attention to the fact that he hadn't cried "even when all that there blood came a-gushin' out in streams." The inference was that he had spilled quarts of the precious life fluid. But then, in midlight of the resumed festival, he had become acutely unwell; a combination of lemonade, three helpings of peach shortcake with whipped cream and, somewhat later, two large raw cucumbers eaten without salt or pepper, on a dare, undoubtedly had something to do with this affliction.

He had been put to bed and dosed copiously; he had remained in bed, strangely languid and, what was stranger still, without appetite, until this following day was well advanced past its nooning. And now that he was up, he might, he reflected, just as well be down in bed again for all the good that getting up had

brought him. What was the use of growing up if everything had to go and turn out this-a-way?

He settled his gloomy face deeper into the chin-rest of his cupped palms. "Oh, shuckin's," he said bitterly, addressing void and untenanted space, "Oh, shuckin's, dag-gone it!" Life was very empty.

There were small, inconsequential stirrings and noises going on—chimney-swifts circling and twittering overhead, already concerned with plans for a fall emigration that still was weeks distant; locusts, up in the cottonwoods, like so many little green locksmiths, filing imaginary keys to fit imaginary keyholes; a creak of wheels in the graveled alley, growing more distant and fainter; the rich soprano of Aunt Mallie, the cook, softened for a crooned rendition of her favorite hymn, "I'm a' inchin' a'long like an inchin' worm"; the querulous gobbling of hens drowsing in the shade; the *buck a tuck a too* of a lordly cock bird in his cote under the stable rafters; but these sounds served to accent the silence rather than to interrupt it. In none of them was there novelty or prospect of diversion.

A new actress appeared upon the scene, to wit, a lean and slinky black lady cat, stepping daintily from picket to picket along the top of the side fence. She dropped lightly to the earth near where the misanthrope was squatted. He bent a lack-luster eye at her approach; she swished a long and nervous tail, but neither, by other signs, recognized the other's presence. This cat was of the type locally known as ash-cats. She had come into the neighborhood during the summer and, for reasons unfathomable, had adopted the Custer family. She was credited with high ratings as a mouser. However, her night-time habits were bad. If left to range, she would prowl under somebody's bedroom window and make engagements, and if confined indoors she would tour the house and, in a harsh and unhappy voice, would break them. Uneasily, she skirted the vicinity of the sitter, then darted nimbly in back of him. A hollow tinkle as of light metalware being mauled about made him look behind.

Against the hen-house was a barrel for food scraps. It was newly emptied and scraped—proof that old Mrs. Slop Johnson had today been making her weekly rounds of this part of town. At the base of the barrel was one item either overlooked by her or intentionally discarded as being unsuitable as provender for pigs. It was a rather slim, rather deep, tube-shaped tin which originally had contained salmon, and it was with this cylindrical object that the lady cat now busied herself.

She sniffed at the open end, where the top had been cut across two ways and bent outward in an effect of a four-pointed star. She pawed at it, so that it rolled on its rounded sides. She inserted first one probing foreleg and then the other in the circular bore of it. With her tail whipping in a brisk half-moon, she brought a lean muzzle repeatedly to the opening, but each time withdrew it before her face entirely was engulfed.

Mildly interested by this peculiar behavior on the part of a cat, the lone onlooker languidly rose and walked rearward and took up the can in his hands and peered down the blind tunnel of its interior. To the walls adhered shreds of fish and smears of rancid-smelling oil. At the bottom was quite a residue of the pinkish meat. He dropped the thing and immediately she pounced upon it again and resumed her strange behavior. For her the contents must have a great and intense fascination; still, she appeared loath to invade it with her head. Yet, if the spectator might judge, the orifice was amply large to admit her skull, and once the skull had entered, the enclosed tidbits should be within easy reach. Goodness knew, that skinny old neck of hers was plenty long enough—like a giraffe's neck or somethin'. Then why didn't she shove on inside?

A partial solution of the puzzle flashed to him. On the occasion lately of a Sunday stroll in the country, his father had elucidated for him certain of the common mysteries of nature. The little lizards that thrived so numerous in these parts turned green where they scuttled in the grass and turned back once more to gray when they raced along the rail fences; that was protective coloration. The partridge had plumage to match its feeding place in the weed stubbles. The spider had eyes all over its body and needed them. There was a reason why a cat wore whiskers: when the whisker-ends grazed the inner edges of a hole, the wearer thereby had advice that this particular gap was too small for the passage of its body.

As he pondered on this, the remembrance of another and a more recent lesson rose up in his mind. Only the day previous, in a birthday lecture, his mother had said to him that upon entering your teens you should take thought to do kindly and worthy deeds, to be gentle to dumb animals and all harmless wild things, to show consideration for your elders, most of all to help

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It was not well that any aged man should be summoned from sleep by such an apparition.

those who strove to help themselves. At the time, the outlined program had not greatly appealed to him; it had been his experience that while benevolent acts might be blessed, they very rarely were followed by any exciting outcome.

Even so, here was a concrete chance to test out the general plan of it, according to the maternal precept. This cat now was trying to help herself, wasn't she? All right, then, he would help her and in his conscience win merit for a good intent. He hurried into the house and when he returned brought with him a pair of buttonhole scissors borrowed from his mother's work-basket. In one of his pants pockets was a square of gingerbread lifted from a pantry shelf as he came through on his former journey. He had abstracted it as a matter of routine and habit, but somehow had not wished to eat it. The phenomenon of his not wishing to eat it was one of the things which had made him fear his health must really be indifferent.

He brought it forth and, stooping, tendered it to the lady cat, at the same time saying "Kitty, kitty, come on, nice old kitty," in an ingratiating manner. She approached, using caution though, and smelled at the proffered delicacy; but it was a suspicious

rather than a hungry smelling. Plainly, she did not care for gingerbread, either. But she lingered on for a brief space and she arched her gaunt spine and—possibly through surprise at evidences of friendliness from this unexpected quarter—she rumbled inside herself somewhere as he put forth a hand and stroked her along the back. Thus with one hand he stroked her and with the other, in quick snips, he sheared off her bristling whiskers close up to the lips. A curious bare-faced effect was produced, but the denuded creature seemed not to mind this. It might be she was tired of wearing mustaches, anyhow. Just as he had clipped away the last remaining long hair she backed out of detention and went to revisit her alluring find.

Then, at that very instant, the measured baritone symphonies in the pigeon-house changed to an alarmed fluttering and moaning. Perhaps a marauding rat was after the nestlings! If so, here was a fresh and a more congenial opportunity for performing one of those praiseworthy deeds. In his new rôle he ran to climb the loft stairs. But when he arrived, the verminous intruder, was there one, had vanished. Deeply disappointed, the young knight-errant descended.



In that nick of time Chief Collister realized what it was he was about to stop. He

The lady cat was nowhere in sight. The can which so had intrigued her also had disappeared, but he failed to take note of this circumstance as moodily he reseated himself on the gunwale of the sawdust bed and became again quite the figure of a solitary and brooding melancholiac.

Tremendous events were impending, indeed already were occurring—events, too, of his own unwitting propulsion—and he in total ignorance of it all. Why, the very beginning of these matters was of a sort which would have lifted him out of his present low state, which instantly would have thrilled him to his youthful marrows. Now, this beginning was after this fashion:

The lady cat, as we know, repaired straightway to a designated tin receptacle. This time she pushed her barbered frontlet directly in, paying no heed that the indents of the aperture brushed both jowls, but promptly she sought to withdraw. Accounting for this attempted precaution, we may safely assume that instinct, in the absence of the informing antennæ, gave her warning that all, perhaps, would not be so well with her.

Instinct was right; all was not well. The flanges of her jaws caught against the inner projections of the asterisked opening. In a quick flurry of mounting panic she slapped with a forepaw at the smooth outer surface of the container, which was for her a grievous mistake, although under the circumstances an excusable one. The can turned to the left, two points, and, because of the conformation of its entryway, clamped itself as firmly upon her as though it had been an integral part of this cat to begin with.

In that fleeting breath of time all senses of dignity and self-restraint—and cats, in a natural state, have both dignity and poise—left her. She became a convulsed unbalanced thing. Emitting a yowl which was muffled at its source, she rose and arched in a mad bound, presenting the unique spectacle of a writhing serpentine black body which terminated headlessly at one extremity in a tubular tin muzzle, and at the other in a tail swollen to four times its proper dimensions, a tail as stiff as a poker, with every separate hair standing stiffly erect on it—really, it was more a chimney-sweep's swab than a poker—with the added bizarre touch of a neck-ruff or frill of metal scallops.

Once, twice, thrice she soared aloft, and the motion of her winnowing pads surrounded her as with a foggy dark blur. Then

a primeval impulse, operating even in that preliminary frenzy, bade her start backing—bade her to back and to keep on backing until she backed out of that sprung trap, that horrid prison, which enveloped her, throat-deep. If the testimony of subsequent eyewitnesses might be accepted, no cat born of cats ever backed more swiftly or covered a greater territory in the same relative space of time than this cat did. On the spot, they awarded her the world's backing up championship.

First of all, she backed up violently and swiftly until her hind-quarters bumped the kitchen steps; thereupon she followed a procedure which, with impromptu variations to suit altered conditions, she followed thereafter. Towering sidewise in the air, she twisted and slapped with bare claws at the unseen obstacle which had checked her, then sheared off and resumed the retreat, now rising on her rear legs and sparring with her front paws, now down again on all fours, but always with that grossly fattened tail pointing the line of travel like a bowsprit set on the wrong end of a rudderless craft driven sharply astern.

The comparisons may be confused, but then so was this cat. Drifting rapidly, she skirted the fountain wall of the kitchen; still going aft, she jibed through the side yard, past the house; thence slanted and tacked at acute angles across the front yard until she caromed against a baseboard of the front fence. She jumped high, whirled in mid-flight, struck out violently, clutched the plank, held fast, mounted a panel by feel, and from its summit threw a magnificent retroflexed somersault outward into space. She alighted in Locust Street, with all the wide world behind her, sight unseen, to back through.

The day, as may have been stated, was warm. At this hour the populace at large dozed in the fag end of the customary siesta. Some folks were coming forth into the glare open—but the town wasn't what you would call wide-awake yet. It was not of record that any responsible person beheld the Custer family's masked lady cat as she progressed—if progressed is the right word—for a distance of upwards of a block and a half. Only, nobody at that time and at that town knew them as blocks; they were *squares*, always. And, for that matter, still are.

We may safely say that our cat's recession only began to attract attention and comment when she reached and had

leaped

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leaped—with a reverse action, rearward, so that he was not completely deluged.

entered Pettus's lamp store at the intersection of Locust Street and Washington Street, an outpost of the main business district. In the interim we may figure her as going with high velocity along, by alternating spells a living projectile, a blind ungovernable pouncing force, a paroxysm, a phantasmagoria, a seeming violation of all natural and physical laws and, even so, absolutely unobserved. So, then, by leaps and bounds, fleetly yet erratically moving, she brings herself and us to Pettus's corner.

The proprietor, Mr. O. D. D. Pettus, better known as Mr. Odd Pettus, was alone when the startling interruption came. That is to say, he practically was alone, although we must take into account old Major Lycurgus Connors, snoring peacefully in a chair tilted back against one of the lintels of the open side door, with his whiskers splayed out upon his venerable chest and his crutches bestowed across his lap. Mr. Pettus, having concluded his own after-dinner nap, was opening a crate of goods behind a cross-partition at the rear of the establishment.

The Major took his title from a more or less vague claim to service in an earlier war than the one of '61-'65. He left it to be inferred that it was the Mexican War. His use of crutches was due to a persistent and rather mystifying affliction. More than a year before, Mr. Julius Hagadorn, real estate and insurance in all its branches, having set out to sell a comparatively new form of policy known as "accident and weekly indemnity, providing regular payments during periods of total or partial incapacity type," had solicited Major Connors, regarding him, by reason of his sedentary habits, as a preferred risk, if ever there had been one. The veteran listened to argument and signed up and, producing capital from some unknown source, paid the first year's premium in advance.

By a curious coincidence, in the very next week following, and while he was, as he said, engaged in splitting kindling wood, he struck himself on his right ankle with the butt of a heavy ax. Superficially the wound in due time healed but the victim remained disabled. Let the examining physician for the insurance company think what he pleased—it was his, the Major's own leg, wasn't it? Well, then, wasn't he the best judge of what kind of a fix it was in? Personally he was of the opinion that the original injury had caused some of the more important leaders to draw.

He could touch the foot to the earth, tenderly, but, without artificial props, couldn't walk a step on it. So he went thereafter on crutches and regularly drew down his twelve dollars and a half a week and, as between him and Mr. Hagadorn, relations had become permanently strained.

Only a little while before, the latter, returning to his office upstairs over Roundtree's drug store after a refreshing forty winks at home, had, with a hostile and suspicious eye, observed the ancient cripple propped alongside Pettus's door, diagonally across the way, there enjoying the unruffled rest of one who is in receipt of a steady and a guaranteed income, and pausing before he mounted the steps, had said to himself:

"Look at him, will you? Just looka yonder at him, I ask you. Well, I bet I catch him off his guard yet, see if I don't—the dadburned old fraud!"

The first suspicion Mr. Pettus had that anything out of the ordinary impended came, as he himself stated later, when he heard—but let us give his own stirring description in his own graphic words:

"All of a sudden there was a kind of a scrambling, scabbling sound out front, like as if something alive was spinning around out there, and then a showcase breaking and things beginning to smash off the shelves.

"So, naturally, with that I came running out from behind to see what was the matter, and I never had such a jolt in my life. Something or other—it was moving so fast I couldn't make out then what it was, but it was about two feet long, more or less, and it was covered all over with stiff black hair and it was screeching and spitting all the time in a curious kind of a choked-up way, and it had about ten or twelve legs, seemed like, or maybe more, and there was a funny looking kind of a fancy tinware coupling capped onto one end or the other of it, but which end I couldn't tell, not at first, but I did in a minute—well, anyhow, this here crazy whatyoumaycallum that I've just been telling you about was going like a streak of greased lightning along that farther shelf yonder, stripping it bare as it went and knocking brand new coal-oil lamps every which-a-way.

"When it got through cleaning off (Continued on page 152)

By RUPERT
HUGHES

TRUE AS STEEL

Illustrations by
Wallace Morgan



When the music raged he and she were faun and

THEY stood shoulder to shoulder looking into the well of the skyscraper.

Below them and opposite was a wall all of windows, except enough steel and stone for casements and floors.

Downward for twenty stories ran the vast flat face of an inverted truncated pyramid riddled with cells—the comb of a monstrous beehive filled with toil—and honey.

The bees were visible where they worked near the light or came to it now and then for any of a thousand purposes: to sit at a desk, confer with someone sitting at a desk or on a desk; to be fitted for a suit or a frock; to pull teeth, or prescribe powders; to write or paint advertisements, keep books, prepare briefs, sketch buildings, con blueprints—what not?

The curtains were in almost no cases drawn and the lives of hundreds were going on beneath the inspection of whoso cared to glance into his neighbor's vineyard.

The roofs of this vertical town were not lifted, as in the story of the Devil on Two Sticks, but curiosity was as easily satisfied.

The earth might look something like that to a god and his goddess on a high cloud.

These two people who watched were not god and goddess, but a business man and a business woman. And they were talking business.

They were talking business, but Mr. Parry knew that he at least was not thinking business. He wondered if Mrs. Boutelle was. He supposed she was and felt himself a pretty low specimen to imagine that she was not. Mrs. Boutelle—Eva Boutelle—was a splendid fellow—er, woman—lady! She had risen from a merely clerical position that she had assumed when her husband went bankrupt. And now she was the manager of the home office; in the confidence of the president. Bank officials treated her with respect and she had reestablished her husband on his feet in his own business. It was said she held him there, gave him advice of evenings; and on Sundays went over his books with him.

For all that, she was a fine looking woman. Though she could talk eighths of a cent with anybody, fight discounts and freight charges, she was no frump, no miser, no machine.

She dressed brilliantly—with a brilliance curiously appropriate to an office—the somber luster of a black pearl in the neck scarf of a dignified man.

She glowed thus where she stood at the elbow of Frank Parry. As they fenced over prices, he noted, he could hardly help noting, that the contour beside his eye was perfect; perfect for a woman of her age and her heroic build; perfect for the mother of a grown son and a married daughter. He thought of the Venus of Melos in dull black taffeta. Her nearer arm was actually cut off sharply by the edge of his own shoulder. He saw in her throat a tower; her chin was urgent, her whole profile valiant, and her breast noble. Her brave soul kept her features lean and her figure tensely erect.

She was more beautiful to him there than any of the pink, lithe little things that youth perfected for a brief hour; more beautiful than the chorus girls and stenographers, telephone and shop girls or the flitting bold flappers that challenged the admiration by line and swagger. Eighteen was spring incarnate, but she was summer at its prime. He dared not guess her age.

He shook himself. He ought not to be looking upon Mrs. Boutelle with an eye that listed her graces. He had a wife at home in Erie, a fine woman, handsome, well-kempt, well-poised, modish. His wife also was a mother of grown children. She need not yield a jot to Mrs. Boutelle in anything except that she managed a home and not a home office.

It surprised him to find his soul dividing itself into antagonists. Why should he be defending his wife against anybody else? Was she not secure in the citadel of his devotion? Yet why should he rebuke himself for merely observing what his eyes brought him? It was no criticism of his wife to acknowledge that there were other women on earth.

With a start he came out of his darting reveries, wondering how long he had been musing, wondering if Mrs. Boutelle had overheard his thoughts. They lingered on the air as if he had spoken them aloud. He tried to say bluntly:

"But if you will not take our paper for ninety days—"

Her voice broke in clear and commercial:

"Oh, we'll take your notes, but we can't quite call it a cash transaction, can we? And give you the discount you ask? We've got to go to our bank to carry us while we carry you, haven't we?"

He did not answer. He was not pondering the commercial riddle, but shuddering to realize that in talking to the manager he was really talking to a woman. He was the unusual man who hates to talk poor even to his own wife.

An ancient impulse to toss her a bargain as one would a diamond invaded his business sense. But in the windows before him, where so much business was in transaction, so much more than business was afoot. He saw a white-haired man swing sideways to his desk, dictating to a too beautiful secretary who had no right to dress so well, so invitingly.

The gold legend on his window carried the names of Atwell, Baines, Foster and Foster, Attorneys at Law. Whichever one of them this man was, Parry could not guess. But as the lawyer paused for an eloquent word, his gaze searching the air alighted on the cheek of the girl and his hand went out to her in a gesture of pain—the pain that beauty inflicts. He caressed the young cheek delicately and a look of deep sorrow came over his face. He leaned forward and kissed the girl. And she laughed almost with

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nymph. When the music stopped he became Mr. Parry and she Mrs. Boutelle.

But Did you Ever Stop to Think That the Best Steel Bends?

the electricity was suddenly turned on.

As if she had lassoed him and dragged him after her, he noted with bewilderment that he was following her—following

patronage. She shook a finger at him. But he sighed visibly and sank back in his chair. He had done a wicked thing but he had not got much fun out of it.

In the next window of the same firm a tall young woman, dressed as simply as a Greek girl and in a costume as revelatory of her architecture, brought a sheaf of papers to a burly man at a desk. As she bent to lay them before him, he reached up and drew her head down to his shoulder. She sat on the arm of his chair and put her arm about his neck while he signed the letters. Their backs were to whatever spectators there might be, but they seemed to be either indifferent or unaware.

In a dentist's office, a dentist paused before he began his torture to flirt with the handsome patient who reclined before him. She repulsed him with laughing insincerity, and her husband would pay a large bill and be told much about the agony she underwent; but nothing else.

In a doctor's office a young physician in a white coat was fondling a trained nurse as she boiled the instruments for the next victim. Cut off by a thin partition, a ladies' tailor was pinning out about a tailored lady.

In other offices only toil was evident, but here and there, for a moment or longer, amorous exchange was rife. At one window where Parry had not glanced his eye was caught by the sudden descent of a shade.

The other glimpses had put his heart to the hurdles, but the drawn curtain set his imagination afire.

The sharp fall of that same curtain made Mrs. Boutelle laugh. As she turned to glance up at Parry her shoulder touched him with the impact of a bird's wing, yet it shook his reason from its foundations—or gave it wings.

Before he could think, his head had darted quickly downward with a birdlike swiftness and his lips had made for her smiling mouth.

But she bent her neck more quickly, and his lips merely swept her cheek. It was like touching a rose's petal-velvet. At once Mrs. Boutelle moved swiftly away from him; but also away from the window! And she laughed, reproving him with infinite gentleness: "Oh! oh! now! now!"

It occurred to Parry in a fleet intuition that if she had really disliked his abrupt onset she would have stepped to the window, or leaned out and called for help, or drawn herself up into a high icicle and groaned "How dare you!"

Yet she laughed and moved into the office as into a cavern. He found himself no more able to drop the impulse than he had once been able to let go of the handles of a battery when

her in the mood of the mountain lion that the cowboy roped. She backed away and he pursued. She did not run and she did not frown; she mocked him—but for what? not for his audacity, surely; not for his silliness; but, it seemed, for hesitating to storm her, for being so dilatory and compunctious. So he stormed her.

He caught her at the edge of her desk. A little struggle ensued and then he sat on the desk and drew her to him with all his force. He was rather proud of his arms. That daily dozen kept him supple and powerful as a youth. Even she said:

"Oh, but you are strong, aren't you?"

She did not object to his arms about her. She stood close in his embrace, kindling him amazingly by her warmth and her feminine softnesses. But when he tried to draw her near enough to kiss her, he found her unconquerable. Her knotless arms stretched out like steel rods. Her muscles grew taut and firm.

She laughed and braced herself against him, wrestled well, saying: "Please! please! we must be sensible! What on earth has come over you! Someone is always walking in. Wouldn't you look foolish if my secretary caught you?"

She astounded him. She did not say any of the immemorial formulas: "Would you disgrace me in the eyes of the world? What do you think I am? Do you do this to every woman you meet? I'm not that kind! I'll call for help! I'll scratch your eyes out! And now our pleasant friendship is ended! I thought I could trust you, but all men are alike. Boo-hoo-hoo. Please go! Go at once!"

She said none of these familiar things and neither did she sink into his arms. She played neither the coquette nor the saint; and he knew only those two sorts, aside from the *tertium quid* of the downright wanton.

He made a desperate effort for her lips. As she threw her head far back, her throat and her upflung chin were irresistibly delectable. She broke at last and came suddenly against him, but before he could reach her face, she ducked her head and he had only the crown of it to kiss.

He looked down into the exquisite wilderness of her elaborate coiffure. He paid her the compliment of a kiss upon the curls still glistening from the iron of some beauty shop.

He was determined to have her lips, and letting go with one hand tried to force her chin up, but this gave her the chance to writhe out of his clasp. When he made to follow her she retreated to the door and laid her hand on the knob, saying:

"Don't make me open the door, please!"

As he paused, baffled, and put up his hands in a sign of truce, she came nearer, saying: "Thank you very much, Mr. Parry,

but I have an appointment with the president at five, and I had hoped to have a definite arrangement with you to lay before him. Hadn't we better stick to shop?"

It was like a dash of ice water. He was tremulous with unsatisfied energies, with remorse for both his failure and his attempt. He felt guilty, both as a traitor to his own wife and as the assailant of another man's wife.

"Forgive me!" he groaned.

"For what?"

"For insulting you."

"Insulting me? I felt greatly flattered. Or did you only pick on me out of a sense of duty?"

"Duty?"

"Doesn't nearly every man feel that he is derelict in courtesy if he does not challenge every woman he meets to a wrestling match?"

"Oh, you can't think that I—forgive me!"

"You are a nice old-fashioned old thing, aren't you? When a man is accosted by a strange woman on the street he doesn't feel angry or ashamed or hurt, does he—or do you?"

"Certainly not—just indifferent."

"Then why should a woman faint or scream, blush or say 'Sir!' just because a man tries to kiss her? So long as he doesn't succeed he hasn't done any harm—and not much if he does succeed. So we women are about ready to accept these try-outs as just part of the day's work. As we were saying—you want ninety days' credit, and—"

They stuck to cold figures, prices of raw materials, manufacturing overhead, dates of delivery, interest on deferred payments, numberless technical refinements in the poetry of trade.

They had just arrived at a working agreement when her inter-office telephone buzzed and she said: "The president is ready for me. I'll see you tomorrow morning?"

She put out her hand and he gave it the clasp one business man gives to another. He clung a moment extra, wondering if he did not owe it to her, or himself, or some vague code, to make another effort at her lips. But she slipped her warm fingers from his palm deftly and said:

"Dining with friends, of course?"

"No—alone at my hotel."

"Really? I—my husband was called out of town. We had bought tickets to the theater. I was going to ask a woman friend. Would you care to take her place?"

"If you would dine with me. But of course you couldn't."

"Of course I will. Call for me at the Glencairn Apartments at six thirty and I'll be dressed. That will give you time enough to put on your dinner coat, won't it?"

"I—I'm sorry—ashamed to say I didn't bring it."

"Then I won't dress either. We'll eat in a quiet place—and the theater doesn't matter. Only a few fools dress these spring nights, anyway."

"But—you'll feel uncomfortable."

"Bosh! I'm not a butterfly. Just give me time for a wash-up—and to get out of this uniform. Good-by. There goes my buzzer again."

In the taxicab he managed to keep from abusing her trust—or accepting her advances, he could not be sure which—though she jostled against him now and then and made no violent ado about getting back to her corner.

Where they ate there was dancing, of course. After he had ordered the dinner at her dictation, she said:

"Do you dance?"

"Not very well."

"Neither do I. But it's the only exercise I can take after office hours. Let's."

And now she was in his arms! He really danced well, as most business men do; the custom of dancing at meals having made it possible for a business man to keep busy during the period hitherto spent in waiting for the waiter. Besides, Parry had his golf club, and his wife made him dance there in return for listening to his links-legends.

He had no more than put his arm around Mrs. Boutelle's waist and taken a few steps when she murmured:

"Liar!"

He set her a difficult new pattern his daughter had taught him for fun, and she followed it with miraculous footing, so he murmured:

"Liaress!"

She squeezed his hand in acknowledgment of the compliment, and he squeezed her waist. How terribly human waists were nowadays to a generation that was brought up to believe that women

grew thicker and thicker corsets on their ribs as soft-shell crabs become hard-shell crabs. No wonder the moralists, who are rarely more than a generation late, had ceased to complain of corsets as the Devil's invention and had begun to denounce their omission as the Devil's intention.

Mrs. Boutelle danced wonderfully. When Parry puzzled over the next step, she did not—as some women horribly did—try to decide for him. She managed to keep busy with the rhythm till he made up his mind. And no matter where he went she was never surprised or in the way.

She was as light and as buxom to his will as his own shadow.

The music ended and they sat down to eat as gay as children who have been running. Young couples at other tables smiled at them as old fogies trying to keep up with the procession; but they were spared this comment and there was youth in their hearts and in their eyes. When the music struck up again they rose at once and slipped through the tables. Now they knew each other they were dance-wise—or was it dance-mad?

"You dance gloriously!"

"Who wouldn't, with you?"

He knew that other women's husbands were dancing with other men's wives. At the next table to them were three couples. They were exchanging wives in the dance and yet they remained friends. The savage tribes that practised community of women, polyandry, polygyny—what more did they do than these Americans who were so proud of their homes and their morals?

Yet when the music stopped the wives must go back to their own men. You must not leave your arm about your partner after the last note nor put it there before the first.

It was a kind of game—like fencing, boxing, wrestling, sham-battling. This was love as a game, matrimonial make-believe, with all sorts of rules. The best of friends fought, fenced, wrestled, gambled for points, but not to the death. So in the dance love must be made, but only so far. Bluffing and feinting were legitimate, but you must play fair and not cheat.

So when the music raged he and she were faun and nymph. When the music stopped he became Mr. Parry and she Mrs. Boutelle and they went formally back to their respectable table.

But they were not quite what they had been. They tried to talk as if they had not just come from each other's arms. But they forgot all about the theater, till suddenly he noted the hour and said:

"We'll be so late for the first act we might as well wait for the second, yes?"

She nodded. "It's not much of a play anyway. I was just going because my husband wanted to go. And then, as usual, he didn't."

It was almost indecent to mention a husband, but he felt a sudden interest in that stranger with whom he had shared this beautiful woman's embraces.

"Tell me about your husband."

"Oh, Dick's the dearest boy in the world. He has his faults, but Heaven knows I have mine. I suppose I'm a poor sort of a wife or I couldn't be so good a business woman. And I am a good business woman. That's a confession, not a boast."

"Poor Dick can never forgive me for being a financier. I didn't know I was one till he went broke. If I had moaned and folded my hands then, and gone into genteel starvation like a lady, he'd have loved me better—maybe—though he never could have enjoyed poverty."

"But I knuckled down and learned business like a new language. And I pulled him out of the hole. I cheated some. I had to. Creditors wouldn't have lent a bankrupt more money if I hadn't flirted a little, and if I hadn't promised a little more than I intended to perform."

"But when I learned the business game, it fascinated me, as it does nearly every woman. That's why we're all going into business. The dam is down and the world is flooded with women. Millions and millions of us are earning our livings. And not in the good old way of being seamstresses, dish-washers, bed makers or pavement pounders. All women are beginning to do what only the actresses used to do—go out into the world on their own without chaperons or guardians."

"We're learning a lot, and it's awfully good for us. We're no better, perhaps, but we're bad in a little bigger way. The old-fashioned woman led a horrible life, for all her virtues, and she didn't have as many virtues as she and her lovers pretended. Besides, it always seems to me that the old-fashioned woman was a loathsome coward to stand all she stood from her men and then refuse to help them when they were in trouble. How could her heart have been honest when she was too lazy to learn anything except fancy stitching and bad cooking and pinning up

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Ethel was a whirlwind of affection. She left powder and rouge with her father and mother for remembrance.

babies' clothes? The woman who wouldn't go out and work for her starving children or her ailing husband was a selfish monster, in my eyes—a worm! The old ideal doll who believed everything her papa and her husband told her and obeyed them both was a stupid idiot or a pious hypocrite. Give me the woman who thinks she's as good as any man—and that's not saying much, at that."

"Is your husband a good man?"

"As men go, yes! At least, I believe so."

"And are you—are you true to him?"

"As true as steel!" She caught the glint, the startle in his eyes, and laughed. "You don't believe me."

"You ought to know."

"Well, I mean just what I say. I'm just as true as steel. But steel bends. A good Toledo blade could be bent double and

spring back. That's the loyalty of the new woman. The better the blade the farther it can bend without snapping, and the quicker it goes back to the straight without a sign of having yielded. I'm Toledo-true."

"But your husband—do you love him?"

"Yes! with all my heart."

Something—jealousy?—skepticism?—bitterness?—goaded him to say:

"With all your heart? And yet——"

She flashed and was angry.

"You don't think that because I danced with you and—well, flirted a little—that I was falling in love with you, do you?"

"Oh, no!"

His humility was so genuine that it won him forgiveness. She put her hand to his arm and pleaded:

"Don't take me seriously. Let's not take each other seriously. Let's have a little fun. Life is short but office hours are long."

"My husband and I are equals now. I've taken the same responsibilities, I have the same privileges. I don't know where he is, but wherever he is, he's dancing at this hour. He's hugging somebody to two-four time. I'm simply taking milord my husband as my pattern."

"The days have passed when the man could go out and leave the woman under lock and key; come home with a lie and let her take her change out of it."

"The key's in the street."

"Yes, and a good place for it. For a million years or less, men have built homes and defended them and worked hard for their wives and children, and yet been a good deal less than a hundred percent faithful to their vows."

"You don't think that every man is false?"

"How should I know? I only know that up to a little while ago the laws were different for men and women; and the customs were still more different. Nowadays women are coming outdoors to see what it is all about, and they're acting just as the men did."

"You're going to let the world go to pieces, then?"

"We didn't build it. We can't hold it together or break it down. We can only break down the old barriers and avenge our grandmothers—make up for what they lost by staying inside the limits the men set."

This was growing altogether too philosophical and Parry felt it foolish to waste his hours in philosophy before a pretty woman.

"Let's have one more dance!"

"All right," she sighed.

They danced very slowly, almost sadly, and that was far more dangerous than the hilarious romping tricky steps that shocked the moralists. The music and the intense communion made for them a whirling solitude, of twin stars of mutual orbit revolving in space.

They went on dancing until the band, weary of peddling saxophony, laid down its instruments and went home. Then Parry and



Mrs. Boutelle said none of the familiar things. She played neither the coquette nor the saint.

Mrs. Boutelle went home. In the taxicab he put his arm about her. She hesitated, then she settled into the nook with a cozy, "All right. But remember, it's only flirting."

She would not be kissed, though she encouraged him, in the womanly way, to keep trying to kiss her. And she kissed him good-night.

In the office they met again early the next day and she was very severe. She played the business game for all it was worth.

He had to turn and play the business man or she would have had his eye teeth included in the contract.

That night she went out again with him. She was dead tired till the music woke her. She grew more reckless, more frankly amorous, and she kept saying:

"I can flirt and I know when to stop."

But she didn't—or, like many another tippler, by the time she reached the time to stop she was no longer able to. Parry stayed in town longer than he needed to have stayed. The cultivation of Mrs. Boutelle became his real business. And at last—

They were both aghast, mournful, because they had both meant to live and die in all honesty and integrity.

She was ashamed, but she did not talk of herself or of him with horror. She accused him of nothing. She had lost a big bet; she was a good sport.

And they were on such equal terms that she could even discuss this disaster.

"I suppose I ought to commit suicide or do some terrible penance. But I can't seem to get back to the good old glooms. I feel like a fool and a stupid animal, but I don't feel the least bit damned."

"Hell-fire has gone out of fashion. Why? It didn't work. It lacked efficiency—results. The upkeep was too expensive. Some of the most vicious people in the world were brought up on it—

brimstone for breakfast, sulphur for luncheon—and roast meat for dinner. And they went so wrong that nobody could go wronger. I'm no worse. I'm trying to be a little more honest. That's all."

He was appalled by such atheism to everything he had held sacred. He asked: "But what about the other people involved? I have a wife—you know. You have a husband. What about their rights? If you're going to be so honest, oughtn't you to tell your husband?"

"And break the poor boy's heart? Nonsense! I love him too well to wreck our pleasant home. Where else could he go?—to some other woman who wouldn't love him half as well or be any truer? No, my sin is my own and I certainly don't intend to bother him with it."

"Good Lord, but we've drifted pretty far from—from square dealing! I feel that I ought to tell my wife the truth. I'll let her divorce me and you

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let your husband give you your freedom. Then we can marry."

"And make ourselves honest?" She laughed at this without shame. "But if we couldn't trust ourselves single, how could we trust each other married? What's the use of publishing a lot of scandal and wrecking two smooth-running homes? No sir, not for me! Besides, I don't love you that much. I don't love you at all—nor you me."

"Oh, but—"

"Your remorse shows how deeply you are in love with your wife. She must be a fine woman to inspire such scruples. She's doubtless human, too. She's too wise to tell you everything."

"Stop! Don't you dare imply that she—"

"Oh, how you adore her, don't you? You look as if you would kill me for doubting her. Well, go back and pretend to believe everything she tells you."

He was furious at this insult to his—"love" was the word he used. He became again the business man. She played the rôle he dictated and the contracts were signed. She got a little the better of him in the deal and he knew it. He told her so, and she laughed.

"It's your parting insult. You are treating me with old-fashioned chivalry—Samson giving Delilah his last curls. If I were independent I wouldn't accept it, but as an employee of the firm I've got to make the best deal I can."

Then the business craftiness fell from her like a glazed mask and she spoke to him with wistfulness in her soft eyes, her soft voice, the soft hand she laid on his wrist. It burned him like ice, and he shivered as she pleaded.

"Don't think of me with too much disgust. I'm really very nice. I like you for being so inelastic. You sin and sin, but you won't write it off as part of the business risk. There's no insurance for that kind of fire, but the loss is constant. You men are the dreamers. We women must face the facts. Perhaps it's better so. Good-by! And pleasant dreams!"

On the way back to Erie, Parry grew more and more anxious about his wife. He forgot to telegraph her that he was coming. She was not at home when he arrived.

The maid said: "Miz' Parry is shoppin', but she'll be home for dinner as usual."

"And my daughter, Miss Ethel?"

The maid snickered: "Oh, Miss Ethel! well she telephomed we wasn't to expect her to dinner at home. But she says I was to lay out her dancin' dress and she would run in to change at the reg'lar hour."

"Regular hour?" His daughter had never had regular hours for anything. "Regular hour from where?"

"From the office, sir."

"What office?"

"Oh, Law! It was to have been a surprise, and I give it away."

"What office?"

"I better leave her tell you. She's went into business. I could give you her phome number."

"No, thanks."

He sank into a chair and waited. After a while he rose and went up to the room he shared with his wife. It was terribly neat and a bit dowdy, but reassuringly, lovably dowdy and inefficient. He glanced across the hall into his daughter's room, went to the open door and peered in timidly.

Across Ethel's bed lay a strip of silk and tinsel—appallingly little clothing for a whole costume. Dancing slippers were set below the hem of the skirt. A pair of stockings and a pair of gloves completed the array. The things looked strange waiting for the absent girl to come and fill them with her body.

The dressing table was an armory of weapons—powder, paint, perfume, ornaments for the hair, ears, neck, arms, fingers, waist.

Her father's own photograph was where it had always stood. But though it was taken years ago, it looked old among the pictures of younger men. The girl's beauty filled the room. Yet it seemed no longer her nest. It was a place of transient abode.

Her home had become her hotel. She was a bee by day and a moth by night. She was neither daughter nor guest. She was a



They were talking business, but Mr. Parry knew that he at least was not thinking business.

business woman. She was in an office being a good sport! "playing the game," like Mrs. Boutelle.

Fevers of primeval masculine wrath were chased along his nerves by agues of modern remorse. He blamed himself for lack of discipline. Yet who had ever curbed a woman? He wanted to denounce his daughter for a reckless wanton, to lock her up, whip her into subjection for her own salvation. Then he remembered the rule of the courts in equity, that the plaintiff must come with clean hands.

Suppose his daughter, from her experience of office customs, rounded on him and demanded if he had the right to such high and mighty talk? That would silence him indeed.

In harem times it was none of a wife's business how many women her husband dealt with. Still less was it a daughter's business. In these degenerate days women were claiming that the husband must be as true as the wife; the lover must not demand more than he brought to the altar himself.

In a thrice of helplessness Parry cursed Mrs. Boutelle for robbing him of the right to wrath. He felt himself a craven weakling to permit his daughter such independence. Yet what a hypocrite he would be to denounce her!

And, after all, he knew nothing. He was assuming that she was guilty because he knew that he had been. He was putting her on a plane with Mrs. Boutelle.

What right had he to insult her so?

As he wavered in a chaos of irresolutions he heard her voice in the lower hall, crying up with her old-time affection:

"Daddy! Daddy! Are you home?"

She galloped up the stairs and flung herself into his arms, called him endearing names, caressed him as if he were her child instead of her father. She was dressed like a business woman—in the simple brilliance, the black pearl luster he had so admired in Mrs. Boutelle!

And of all the things she could think of to welcome him with, she chose to boast:

"I'm your true daughter! I'm a financier. I've gone into the office of old Jake Leighton. I've had

(Continued on page 98)



CRYSTAL EASTMAN

*Who on the opposite page describes an experiment
which changed a Husband into a Sweetheart*

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CRYSTAL EASTMAN

Tells How Two People Found Happiness by

MARRIAGE *Under Two Roofs*

"YOU'RE breaking up our home," my husband said.

"No I'm not. I'm trying to hold it together. You know we've had nothing worthy the name of home for years, and the thing we have is going to pieces so fast that nothing but desperate measures will save it. Try my scheme, then. Only try it, that's all I ask."

We tried it. And it has given us the one serene and happy period of all our married life. We no longer even think of separation, much less talk of it or threaten it. For the first time the fact that we love each other and have two splendid children is making us happy instead of miserable. My husband, who fought the scheme so bitterly, admits this now and often ex-patiates upon it.

Here is the story as well as I can tell it. To begin with, we had to move. The building in which we had lived for five years was to be torn down. Well, it just seemed to happen without our saying any more about it that we moved into two places instead of one. I took a small flat for myself and the children toward the edge of town where there are playgrounds and green spaces. My husband took a room in a clean rooming house within easy walking distance of his office. The two cost just a bit less than we had had to pay for a place large enough to hold us in reasonable comfort, all together. John's clothes and strictly personal possessions went to the room. Mine and the children's and our furniture, pictures and joint accumulations went to the flat. Technically he lives at one place and I at the other. But of course he keeps a change of clothes and all the essentials for night and morning comfort at my house, as might a favorite and frequent guest.

Every morning, like lovers, we telephone to exchange the day's greetings and make plans for the evening. Two or three times a week we dine together at my house and John stays all night. If we are to dine at a friend's house we usually arrange to meet there and at the end of the evening my husband may come home with me and he may not, according to our mood. If we are going to a theater I meet him in town for dinner, and after the show there are again always two possibilities—going home together like married lovers or parting on the street corner and going off in the night alone to our separate beds. And because neither course is inexorably forced upon us, either one is a bit of a lark. It is wonderful sometimes to be alone in the night and just know that someone loves you. In other moods you must have that lover in your arms. Marriage under two roofs makes room for moods.

Now about the children; for, paradoxical though it may seem, it is having children that complicates marriage so. Many pairs of lovers can have a house in common, a car, a cook, a club and all their Christmas presents; they can eat the same food, see the same plays, go to the same parties, cherish the same friends for years on end and enjoy it. But just introduce one or two children into that home, strong modern personalities, strange ebullient creatures neither his nor hers but mysteriously and indissolubly *theirs*—theirs to love, theirs to teach and train, theirs to be proud of, theirs to be ashamed of—and you have the material for tragedy. Obscure jealousies so often arise, deep resentments may be so long unspoken, rivers of cold misunderstanding may flow forever between the two who were at one before.

Perhaps I exaggerate the difficulty of bringing up children together. If the two parents come from an almost identical background, or if one has had a miserable childhood which he is glad to forget, there may be no difficulty at all. It is when, as in our case, both parents can claim a happy childhood but under totally different auspices, that their joint efforts to raise a family

come so often to grief. I think my husband and I have quarreled with more anguish and bitterness over our children than over all other matters put together. But we quarrel no longer. The two-roof plan has made an end of quarreling.

"No wonder!" protests the indignant male. "You've got your way. You have the children, they live with you and you can bring them up as you like. But is that fair?"

Surely, as society is organized today, it is the mother's job to bring up the children. The father's job is to earn the living, and if he belongs as the father in our family does to the intellectual proletariat—people of education with expensive tastes and no capital, who must live by their wits—he will be hard at it for the first fifteen or twenty years of his married life. How can he be more than a "consulting partner" in the twenty-four hour a day job of bringing up children? He can criticize and interfere, or praise and suggest, according to his nature, but he cannot really do the job. Circumstances compel him to leave it to the mother. In big decisions about the children, of course, the father's will counts often more than the mother's, but in the everyday matter of training and association the most he can do is to "use his influence."

And in the usual American middle-class family, when is father's influence most often brought to bear? At breakfast! At breakfast of all times when everyone is already a little on edge from violating his natural instincts—children forced to "hurry up" and "be quiet" and "keep at it" when they long to dawdle and "fool"; mother forced to begin being patient and kind at a time in the day when it is against nature to be patient and kind; father, already heavy with his day's work, forced to spend his last precious half-hour in this crude confusion when his whole being cries out for solitude.

This at least can be said for the two-roof scheme: it automatically relieves father of the family breakfast, and the family breakfast of father! And no hard feelings anywhere. In our family father is now a treat. He might turn up some morning during the week, but if he does it is a surprise and everybody is so good that breakfast is almost a social occasion. Saturday afternoon father usually appears and takes you off for a lark somewhere, and Sunday he is just like a member of the family.

Is there really anything unfair in this arrangement? Are not the father's comments, criticisms and suggestions on the upbringing of his children apt to be better given and better received in the comparative leisure and freedom of Sunday than in the nagging, inescapable contact of a daily breakfast? Must a consulting partner review the raw, unfinished work every day?

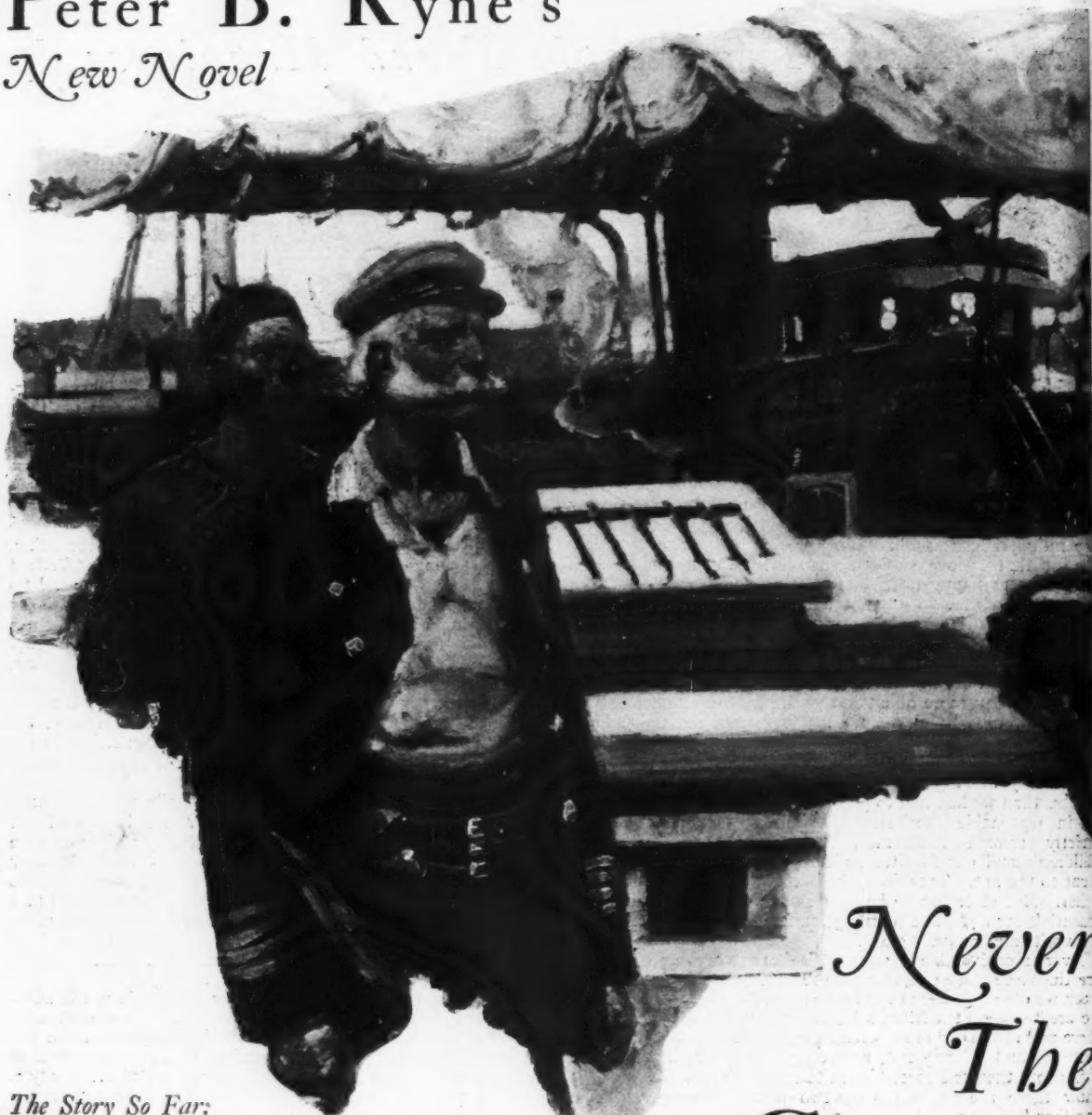
At this point, I foresee, the passionate upholder of family life will try to compromise with me. "Why two roofs?" he will argue. "Why not a room for father at the top of the house and his breakfast served there? Is it necessary to drive him right out of the house?"

But I stand my ground. To begin with, for the type of family I am thinking of there seldom is a house. It is a flat, an apartment, a floor or two floors, at most a very small house. If father is lucky enough to have a room of his own it will not be out of hearing. He will always be acutely aware of the children in their noisy process of growing up. And mother will be aware of his presence in the house. The strain will still be there.

Moreover, even though you live in a palace, two rooms will not give you what two roofs will give you. Let us forget breakfast now—imagine it is evening, the long day's work is over, the children are asleep. Speaking from the woman's standpoint, can there be anything more irritating than a husband who shuts himself up in a room and says or (Continued on page 100)

Peter B. Kyne's

New Novel



The Story So Far:

TAMEA OLUOLU LARRIEAU, half-caste queen of the South Sea Island of Riva, and Maisie Morrison, aristocratic Californian, are rivals for the heart of Dan Pritchard. It came about this way:

Tamea's father, Gaston, a French sea captain who was bringing her to America to be educated, committed suicide when he learned he had incipient leprosy; and he appointed Dan guardian of Tamea and her quarter-million dollar fortune. Now Dan, who is highly successful in business but has the instincts of an artist and adventurer, does not understand women very well; so, under the impression that Tamea is a mere lonely and impulsive child, he brings her to his bachelor domicile to live.

Thereby, as the saying goes, throwing a monkey wrench into the machinery. For Tamea is not a child, but a mature woman, exotic, beautiful, impetuous, and at once in love with Dan. She sets his household by the ears with her regal airs. Julia, the maid, worships her; Mrs. Pippy, the housekeeper, hates her; and Sooeey Wan, the old Chinese cook, who is almost a second father to Dan, urges the latter to marry her forthwith—to Dan's horror.

Also, Tamea causes Maisie, whom Dan has known for years and could never quite make up his mind to marry, many bitter hours of jealousy; and she brings Mark Mellenger, Dan's best friend, on the run to rescue Dan from infatuation with the girl. On any excuse or none, she kisses Dan impulsively. He tears his

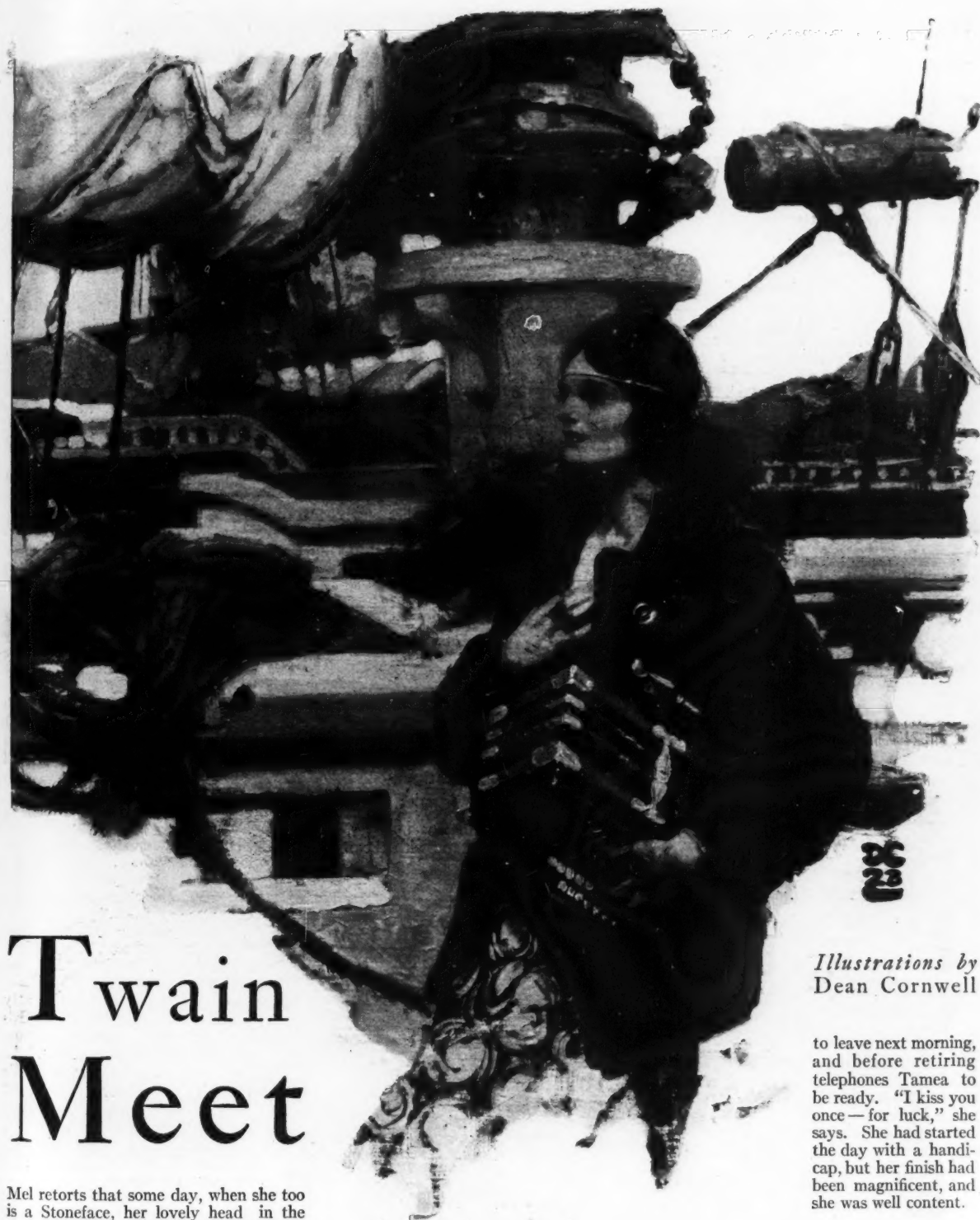
Never The Shall

hair over this wisp from the South Seas, not knowing what to do with her—yet steadily and inexorably falling in love.

Which adds to Dan's already numerous troubles. In business he is at a crisis, for his insufferable elder partner Casson (Maisie's uncle) has speculated wildly in rice during his absence, and though Dan has succeeded in selling part of the rice cargoes, he feels that the firm is not yet out of danger. He is more than ever anxious to terminate an impossible partnership by buying out, or selling out to, Casson.

One day Mel suggests that Tamea be sent away to Del Monte with Maisie for a couple of weeks. So they all go down for the week-end. And matters come to a head.

Mel has upbraided Dan very plainly. He has talked as plainly to Tamea. At Del Monte she gets him alone, exerts her witchery, and forces him to confess that he loves her. Then she tells him her revenge is to leave him like a stone image gazing ever out to sea for that which never comes. And



Twain Meet

Illustrations by
Dean Cornwell

Mel retorts that some day, when she too is a Stoneface, her lovely head in the dust, he will lift her up and comfort her; for his love is the kind that endures.

Next day Dan goes motoring with Maisie, whom, in fear of Tamea, he has made up his mind to marry; but he blunders in such a way that it is up to Maisie to do the actual proposing—an act utterly foreign to her nature. So the ride ends in a fiasco—irritation for Dan, for Maisie, tears.

That night Dan walks alone with Tamea, and a second love scene occurs—quite different. For Tamea is not averse to taking that which she loves, and Dan, under the thrill of her kisses, is forced to tell his love and his doubts; and they talk long and quietly until he begins to feel that he really knows her. Tamea promises, reluctantly, that she will go to a convent school.

Maisie meets Dan when Tamea has retired. Her caustic remarks, prompted by jealousy, irritate him still further. He decides

to leave next morning, and before retiring telephones Tamea to be ready. "I kiss you once—for luck," she says. She had started the day with a handicap, but her finish had been magnificent, and she was well content.

TAMEA was awakened by Julia at six o'clock. At seven she and Dan breakfasted together; at seven thirty they entered Dan's limousine, the smiling Julia tucked the robe in around her charge, took her seat beside Graves, and the homeward heira began. At San José they looked in on the Mother Superior of a splendid convent that catered to the educational needs of young ladies of high-school age, and Dan made arrangements to enter Tamea there the following day.

And this she did. Tamea had quite a wild weeping spell at the parting and Dan had to promise to write to her daily. Dan, aware that all incoming and outgoing mail would be censored at this convent, realized that he faced daily the awful task of composing an innocuous little letter to Tamea, and he

was troubled with the thought that Tamea might not understand and go into open revolt as a result.

Finally the ordeal was over and Dan motored back to San Francisco. Here he discovered that there was trouble in the Seattle office of Casson & Pritchard and that it was necessary for him to go there at once. He welcomed the opportunity. Promptly he wrote Tamea that he was called away, but that he would telegraph her every day while he was traveling. Telegraphing was so much easier than writing under a handicap. Surely Tamea would understand that he could not afford to call her endearing names by wire.

He was gone two weeks. Graves met him at the ferry depot upon his return.

"I'm glad you've returned, sir," Graves announced. "The fur has been flying since you left. Mrs. Pippy gave Julia the air the minute you and Miss Larrieau were out of the house, so Julia beat it down to the convent and reported to Miss Larrieau. Up comes Miss Larrieau from the convent and tells Mrs. Pippy where to head in, and there's a grand row. Mrs. Pippy calls on Sooley Wan to give Julia the bum's rush out of the house and Sooley Wan tells her to go to Halifax or some other seaport.

Then Mrs. Pippy cries and Julia cries and Sooley Wan cusses like a pirate and Miss Larrieau takes charge of the house and she and Sooley Wan are running it."

Dan gasped. "But where is Mrs. Pippy?"

"She must have got frightened and left, or else Miss Larrieau fired her. Anyhow, she's gone."

"Has Miss Larrieau returned to school?"

"No, sir. I think she's waiting until you get back."

Dan sighed in lieu of the words he could not muster. Here indeed, in the expressive terminology of Graves, was "Hell to pay and no pitch hot."

He dropped in at the office for a few minutes to look through his accumulated mail. In it he found a formal resignation from Mrs. Pippy. She informed him of the address to which he might mail her check.

"I suppose I shall never have another Mrs. Pippy," Dan sighed, then added, "and I hope I never shall."

The moment he entered his home Tamea leaped out at him suddenly from behind the portières, where she had been hiding. "Cheril!" she cried and favored him with a bone-cracking hug. "My adored one," she added, and delivered a barrage of osculation that left Dan quite breathless.

When he could speak he said: "Graves has told me of the battle which took place here during my absence. Tamea, I am not pleased with your high-handed procedure."

"P-f-f. Dear one, that Pippy was offensive. I disliked that old woman the first time she looked at me—like this," and Tamea wrinkled her adorable nose. "There was nothing else to do. She had defied me by dismissing Julia, and this was mutiny, since Julia was mine and you had given her to me. I have done well and you must not reprove me, dear one. If you do I shall be very unhappy."

"Oh, it's all right, it's all right," Dan protested. "It's just that I hate a beastly row. You did not secure permission from the Mother Superior to come here?"

"I?" the amazed girl demanded. "I, Tamea, plead for permission? You do not know me, I think, dear one. Julia came in the car with Graves and I left at once. At the gate the nun on watch desired to stop me. She even laid hands upon me, but I thrust her aside. *Tiens*, I was angry!"

"I judged as much from a letter which the Mother Superior wrote me. Tamea, you may not return to that convent. They cannot control you and they do not desire that you remain there longer. My dear, can you not realize that this is very, very embarrassing to me?"

"It is very delightful to me, darling Dan. I did not wish to remain there. They opened your letters to me and before I could seal my letters to you they were read. So I did not send them, but kept them all for you. Tonight after dinner you shall read them, one by one. Yes, at that convent there was much between us of what you call in this country rough house."

Sooley Wan came in from the kitchen, grunted a greeting to his employer, picked up Dan's bags and disappeared upstairs with them. Returning, he paused for a moment at the foot of the stairs and said:

"Missa Dan, you fire Julia, Sooley Wan ketchum boat, go back China pretty quick."

His impudence enraged Dan. "You may start now, Sooley Wan," he told the Celestial. "I'll keep Julia, but you're fired."

Sooley Wan had evidently planned for this moment. His shrill, unmirthful cackinnation rang through the house. "Boss," he piped, "you klazy, allee same Missie Pip. You fire me? Pooh-pooh! No can do. Sooley Wan belong your papa, papa give me to you, how can do? You fire me, who ketchum dinner, eh? You klazy."

Again Dan sighed.

It appeared that Sooley Wan's first introduction to the Pritchard household had been due to a tong war in Chinatown. Sooley Wan, young, bold, aggressive, had been marked for slaughter in a tong feud, and the high-binder whose duty it had been, for a consideration, to waft him into the spirit world had dropped Sooley Wan with his first shot. Then a cane had descended upon the assassin's wrist, causing him to drop his pistol. The peace-maker, Dan's father, had thereupon possessed himself of it, handed the would-be assassin over to



Maisie yearned to take Dan to her heart, to cherish and comfort him.



"There was a young lady aboard," the tug master told Dan. "A peach. And she had been crying."

the police and forgotten the incident. Sooeey Wan eventually recovered from his wound and at once sought out Pritchard senior, to whom he explained that by reason of an ancient Chinese custom he who saved a human life was forever after responsible for that life. Therefore, it behooved Dan's father to place Sooeey Wan on his payroll instantan, which being done, the latter became one of the assets of the Pritchard estate. Inasmuch as Dan had been the sole heir to that estate, naturally, to Sooeey Wan's way of thinking, he had inherited his father's responsibility for Sooeey Wan's life while the latter continued to live. *Ergo*, Sooeey Wan could not be dismissed!

Decidedly, reprisals were not in order. There was naught to do save accept the situation gracefully, cast about for another school for Tamea, and try, try again. Dan recalled that there was a very excellent convent in Sacramento. He would call

upon the Mother Superior there and offer to pay double the customary rate in return for special treatment and forbearance in Tamea's case.

"Well, I'm awfully happy to see you again, sweetheart," he said, and favored Tamea with one hearty kiss in return for the dozens she had showered upon him. "Any news from Maisie or her aunt?"

"Divil a wor'd, sor," said Julia, coming downstairs at that moment. "I called her up, makin' bould enough to ax her to reason wit' Mrs. Pippy, sor, but she would not. Says she to me, says she: 'Julia, there's no reasonin' wit' anybody in that household, so I'll not be botherin' me poor head about them. Whin Misther Pritchard wants me he'll sind for me.'"

"Quite so, Julia; quite so. She is absolutely right." He went upstairs, bathed and changed his clothes. He



"Mr. Daniel Pritchard, I opine," said the Captain, "accompanied by none other than the Chinese person who spilled the beans. Well, Tamea is not in Tahiti."

intended returning to the office, but Tamea pleaded with him to spend the remainder of the day amusing her. So he took her to a vaudeville show, and Tamea held his hand and, between acts, whispered little messages of love. Once, when the house was dark, she leaned over and kissed him very tenderly on the ear.

They went to an Italian restaurant, the Fiore d'Italia, up in the Latin quarter. Dan had been a guest there about three times a month for years, and Mark Mellenger had been an almost nightly habitué for fifteen years. Dan had a desire to bask for an hour in the light of Mellenger's delightful but infrequent

smile and had chosen to take Tamea to the Fiore d'Italia in the hope of seeing him there.

Mellenger was just rising from his table as they entered. He greeted them both cordially, but to Dan's pressing invitation to sit and talk awhile he replied that he was much too busy at the office and hurried away. Scarcely had he gone when Grand-père, an ancient waiter who looked for his evening tip from Mark Mellenger as regularly as evening descended upon San Francisco, came in with an order of striped bass *à la* Mellenger. He stood a moment blinking at the vacant chair. Then he glanced

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toward the peg upon which Mellenger's wide soft hat always hung and, finding it gone, sighed and returned to the kitchen with the order.

"Why, Mel left without eating!" Dan exclaimed.

"Yes, he saw us first, dear one. He desired to spare himself the embarrassment of having to speak too much with me," Tamea explained. "At Del Monte I told Mellengair some things he did not like."

"Oh, Tamea, how could you? He is my dearest friend."

She shrugged.

"He told me things I did not like. We are even now. I think I should tell you that he will not come to your house again for dinner while I am there."

Again Dan sighed. Things were closing in around him. He had lost an excellent housekeeper, his maid and his cook were in open revolt, his best man friend avoided him and his best woman friend had quarreled with him—and all over Tamea. The amazing part of it all was that he simply could not quarrel with Tamea. He could only adore her and strive to believe that it wasn't adoration.

There was dancing to the music of an accordion played by an Italian. He was a genial man, with smiles for all the dancers, and very generous with his encores. The camaraderie of the place appealed to Tamea at once, and when presently the accordion player, between dances, commenced to play very softly "O, Sole Mia," and an Italian waiter who had almost attained grand opera paused with a stack of soiled dishes on his arm and sang it, Tamea was transported with delight.

"We will dance, no?" she pleaded brightly.

Dan would have preferred the bastinado, but—they danced.

All eyes were on Tamea. Who was she? Where did she come from? That was Pritchard with her, was it not? Who was Pritchard? Zounds, that girl was a corker! How she could dance and how she loved it! A regular Bohemian, eh?

"You play very well, Monsieur," Tamea complimented the musician as the dance ceased. "Please, I would play your accordion. It is so much finer than my own."

Before Dan could protest the Italian had handed her his instrument, Tamea had seated herself and commenced to play "Blue Danube Waves."

Dan stood, beseeching her with his eyes to cease making a spectacle of herself and return to the table, but the spirit of carnival had entered into Tamea and she would not be denied. She knew what Dan wanted her to do but she would not do it.

"Everybody dance," she commanded. "And I will play that this tired musician may dance also. It is not fair that he should play always."

There was a hearty round of applause and the dancers came out on the floor.

"Tamea, dear, you are making a spectacle of yourself," Dan pleaded.

"If you would do the same, dear one," she replied lightly, "you would be such a happy boy."

She was beating time with her foot; and when the dance was ended she played a ballad of Riva and sang it. The Fiore d'Italia was in an uproar of appreciation, a thrill at a new sensation, as the girl handed the accordion back to its owner, thanked him and joined Dan at their table.

The girl's face glowed with a happiness that was touching. "Here is life, dear one," she cried. "Why should I stifle in a convent when there is joy and singing and dancing in your world? We will come here very frequently, no? . . . Oh, but yes! You would not deny your Tamea the pleasure of this beautiful place? Would you, darling Dan Pritchard? Say no—very loud—like that—'No.'"

"No," he growled.

His reward was a loving twig at his nose while those around him laughed at his embarrassment. What a dull fellow he was to be so evidently appreciated by such a glorious creature, they thought.

It was eleven o'clock when they left the Fiore d'Italia, and Tamea had sung, danced and played her way into the hearts of the patrons to such an extent that Dan felt that he could never bear to patronize that restaurant again. Thus he retired with the conviction that in addition to robbing him of his friends Tamea had now robbed him of his favorite restaurant.

The following morning he journeyed to Sacramento to arrange for Tamea's entrance into the convent there. To his huge disgust smallpox had developed in the school and the convent

was under quarantine. So he returned to San Francisco and, feeling a trifle depressed at the manner in which fate was pursuing him, he telephoned to Maisie.

With characteristic feminine ease Maisie elected to forget that she had been fifty percent responsible for their disagreement at Del Monte. She had thought the matter over, tearfully but at great length, and had come to the conclusion that even if she was not a martyr she could not afford to let Dan Pritchard think so. After a silence of about two weeks Dan had a habit of ringing up and burying the hatchet, and Maisie

hadn't the slightest doubt but that this was his mission now.

"Hello, Dan'l," she answered, and her clear, cool voice sounded like music in Dan's ears. "Are you in trouble?"

"I'm up to my eyebrows in it, Maisie!"

"Oh, I'm so sorry, Dan! But then it's no more than I expected. I thought you'd send for me when you needed me."

"I do not need you!" he replied furiously, and hung up.



THE RIGHT HONORABLE WINSTON S. CHURCHILL

IT was in a stately old home in Sussex Square, London. Up and down before the fire strode one of the dramatic figures of our time, the Right Honorable Winston S. Churchill. Son of an English nobleman and an American beauty, he has lived in the limelight from his teens. War correspondent, novelist, diplomat, member of Parliament, cabinet minister, First Lord of the Admiralty in the World War, Colonel of a regiment in the trenches—there seems no avenue of exciting endeavor or adventure he hasn't traveled. And how he can describe it all! That afternoon in London, Frazier Hunt and I sat for three hours more thrillingly entertained than either of us ever was in the theater.

Of course we insisted that he must tell these stories—the best stories from life I've heard—to Cosmopolitan readers.

The first, the story of his escape from the Boers in the South African War, will appear next month. [R. L.]

following his brief spat with Maisie over the telephone he found Tamea's society so comforting and stimulating that he shuddered at the thought of hurting her—himself—with the promulgation of a sophisticated argument she could not possibly understand and which she would have rejected even had she possessed the gift of understanding a white man's reason for discarding her love, even while he yearned for it.

From time to time Sooeey Wan, growing impatient at his adored employer's shilly-shallying, urged definite action. Again and again he reminded Dan that the sooner he married the lady queen the sooner would his adventures in fatherhood commence. Sooeey Wan confided that he had consulted with the most eminent magicians in Dupont Street, with a priest who was a very wise man and an oracle; he had sought signs of approbation from his numerous Chinese gods and had propitiated them with much burning of punk in the Joss houses; he had burned devil papers in every room of the house and had strung firecrackers completely around the house and set them off, to the signal terror of the neighbors.

The magician had predicted for Dan five brawny sons—a hard hand to beat. The oracle had advised quick action since procrastination has ever been the thief (Continued on page 156)

By
SEWELL
FORD

Meet
Your
Old Friend
Shorty McCabe,
in
Shaking
Doris
off the Bough

Illustrations by J. W. McGurk



Doris goes as dumb and lifeless as a cold boiled potato. She don't play up at all.

IT HAD started out to be such a perfect day, too. Anyway, I'd given my squad of busted curb brokers, oily richers and nervous prostraters a snappy mornin' workout and parked the lot with Swifty Joe in the dormitory; I'd had a good husky lunch with Sadie and the kids; and from the front porch I was gazin' out satisfied and peaceful over Physical Culture Farm to the Sound, thinkin' how pretty everything was sittin' and so on, when up rolls a limousine and this hard-eyed old dame with the duplex chin eases herself out and comes heavin' up the steps.

"Are you the prize-fighter?" she demands.

"Me?" says I. "Why, lady, I ain't been in the ring for so long I wouldn't know how to get through the ropes."

"But you *are* the person known as Shorty McCabe, aren't you?" she goes on, and by the way she says it you'd think she was readin' an indictment.

"Guilty," says I, before I could stop myself.

"And this—this Physical Culture Farm is your establishment, isn't it?" she asks, accusin'.

"Right again," says I. "But it's a stag proposition, ma'am. Sorry I can't do anything for your blood pressure, but we—"

She cuts me off by wavin' a fat hand that's so decorated with rings it had me blinkin'. "Stop!" says she.

"I got the signal, lady," says I.

"Don't call me lady," says she.

"My error," says I. "I was just takin' a sportin' chance."

That gets a glare out of her. "Young man!" says she.

"Thanks," says I.

"Mr. McCabe, then," is her next try.

"'Professor' is what I put on my business cards. Maybe this ain't business, though? If you was lookin' for Mrs. McCabe—"

"I think you are the person I wish to talk to—first," says she, drillin' me with one of them assault and battery looks.

"Oh, well!" says I. "Ladies' choice."

She goes stiff in the neck and registers scorn. "I came here, Professor McCabe," says she, "because I am a worried mother."

"Wrong number," says I. "There's a nerve sanitarium up near Stamford, though."

She waves the jewel exhibit at me once more. "I am here to ask why my daughter comes secretly to this house so often."

"Eh?" says I, gawpin'.

"Don't try to look innocent," says she. "Answer me—are you the man?"

That's right, snicker. But I want to tell you it ain't so comic to have a heavyweight old girl with a Gibraltar jaw and glittery eyes come swarmin' up on your own front porch and hand you anything as crisp as that. I'll admit I did some squirm in the rocker and maybe I went pink in the ears. I had visions of poison pen letters being read in court and a district attorney shakin' his finger under my nose. But I made a stab at being gay and careless.

"Course," says I, "I know I'm rated as a snappy dresser, and maybe I got fascinatin' ways, but I didn't think I looked as much like Valentino as all that."

"Huh!" she snorts. "If you must know, I should say you would be the last man in the world with whom my daughter would become infatuated."

"Oh, is *that* so!" says I.

"But there's no accounting for the taste of a silly girl."

"How flatterin'!" says I. "She's a two-minute egg, is she?"

"A what?" says the old girl.

"Kinda simple in the head, eh?" says I.

She near blew a gasket at that, but after she calms down a bit she informs me that I'm a stupid fellow. "My Doris," says she, "is a mere child."

"Oh, well," says I, "somebody's been stringin' you, then. No flappers around here. What makes you think this is the place?"

Shaking Doris Off the Bough

"Because," says she, "my chauffeur has confessed to bringing her here on several occasions. There must be some attraction."
 "Maybe it's the scenery," I suggests. "This view we get is—"

"Bah!" says she. "I know Doris. She comes here to see some man. The poor child is just at that romantic stage when she imagines she must be in love with someone or other. We have just broken off a most unfortunate affair, and now—well, what have you to say for yourself?"

"Blamed if I know exactly," says I. "This—this is so sudden, and it's a line I ain't practised much. You see, I've always thought I could depend on my face as a complete alibi in such a case. Honest, ma'am, do I look like a he-vamp to you? No, you needn't answer. I forgot you'd gone on record as to that point. But anyway, I ain't seen your little Doris."

She's still cyin' me suspicious. "Then why has she been here three times during the past week?" she demands. "What other man have you around the place?"

"Why," says I, "there's nobody regular except Swifty Joe, my assistant, and he's got a cauliflower ear and an undershot jaw; and besides, he's so skirt-shy that if he found a girl lookin' at him he'd climb a tree. Course, Sadie always has more or less young folks comin' and goin', and lately there's been that sappy tenor, Percy Pillgast, but—"

"Pillgast!" says she, explosive. "He's the one—the wretched little nobody who has bewitched Doris. Someone brought him to our home, Chichester Hall, to sing at a charity lawn fête, and since then she has behaved like a perfect little fool; inventing excuses for having him at the house, writing silly notes to him—which I saw that he never got—and sobbing all one night when I told her we had sent word to Pillgast that he must not come again. And the creature is here, is he?"

"Oh, on and off," says I. "He's kind of a discovery of Mrs. McCabe's. His mother used to be our laundress, and when somebody kidded Mrs. McCabe into believin' that this Percy had a wonderful voice she began financin' his musical career. I shouldn't worry about him, though. He's a harmless little shrimp."

"Harmless!" says the old girl. "He's a menace. I've seen him. He has bold dark eyes. And the son of a washer-woman! Professor McCabe, you must put a stop to these meetings. You must send him away."

"Ain't that putting it a bit strong?" says I, gettin' warmed up under the collar. "Just remember that Mrs. McCabe thinks he's a buddin' genius and is more or less proud of him. She's plannin' to get him signed up with an opera company and is grubstakin' him in town until he can connect with a pay envelope. I'd get myself in wrong if I tried to shoo him off. Besides, he don't bother me any."

"Then you refuse?" says she.

"That's the size of it," says I.

"Perhaps you don't know who I am, Professor?" says she.

"I can guess," says I. "If your place is Chichester Hall, down on the Neck, then you must be Mrs. Gridley Snell."

She stretches her chin proud and admits that she is. Then she proceeds to explain how, if I don't banish Percy at once, she's goin' to be very much displeased with me.

"That'll be tough," says I, "but I expect I'll have to stand it."

"Professor McCabe," says she, "I may as well tell you the results of your obstinacy are quite likely to be more disagreeable than you suspect. My husband, as you should know, is not wholly without influence in this community."

I nods. Course, I'd known all about Gridley Snell ever since he came up here in Westchester and let some of them real estaters unload the old Quintly place on him, with its forty-room house and twenty acres of grounds. A tall, skinny, hump-shouldered, droop-eyed old party he is, who got in on the ground floor of a chain drug store combine and made a killing. He remodeled the Quintly place, called it Chichester Hall and started to stage a country gentleman act. Also he buys up enough stock in the local bank to get himself made a director, is elected Commodore of the Yacht Club, and the family does a social splurge. The usual stuff.

"What would he do?" I asks. "Have me shunted off the entertainment committee? Don't make me cry."

But I might have known that an old dame with a jaw like hers hadn't come over here just to pass the time of day. Next thing I know she's handin' me what amounts to a regular ultimatum. Uh-huh. It's something she thinks will be a knock-out, too. And it amounts to this—if I don't step in and help wreck this Percy-Doris romance, the Snells propose to have me run out of Rockhurst on the ground that my Physical Culture Farm is a public nuisance.

"Eh?" says I, gawpin'. "You mean that?"

"Precisely," says she. "Mr. Snell has already consulted some of the other large owners of real estate in this section and they tell him that this establishment of yours, where you have almost

naked men being exercised in running trunks, and with your gymnasium and your pugilist helpers, is a distinct detriment to the community. It affects values, keeps desirable purchasers away. With very little effort a movement towards causing your removal could be organized, Professor McCabe. However, I am disposed to give you a reasonable time to consider—until noon tomorrow."

Well, you can guess how that hit me. The McCabes didn't come over from County Clare as peace delegates. Not our branch of the fam'ly, anyway. I expect if I'd had on a celluloid collar it would have caught fire from my neck. But I'm as polite to the lady as I know how.

"Thanks for the hunch, ma'am," says I. "If I'm to be thrown out of Rockhurst it's nice to know it far enough ahead so I can pack a few things in a trunk. And in case I should want to say good-by or anything to Gridley Snell, where could I reach him on the phone about now?"

"Mr. Snell is at Chichester Hall," says she. "But it will do you no good to talk to him."

"Won't it?" says I.

Her limousine hadn't rolled through the gates before I was havin' their second butler page Gridley about the place, and inside of two minutes I had him on the wire and was sketchin' out what his heavier half had threatened to do to me and why.

"Yes, yes, I know," says he.

"Quite correct."

"Then listen, old top," says I. "Don't you waste any time gettin' your offensive under way. Not on my account. If you think you can put the skids under me, why, go right to it. The gong's rung. We're off to the races. And you can tell Mrs. Snell for me that, while I'm no matrimonial bureau, any little thing I can do to push along this affair between her Doris and Percy Pillgast will be done with much pleasure."



There's a lot of high voltage stuff in them Irish blue eyes of Peggy's.



"Don't try to look innocent," says the dame with the Gibraltar jaw. "Are you the man?"

He was gaspin' out some protest when I hung up and started to find Sadie. I locates her out in the flower garden, where she's fillin' a basket with pink phlox. "I'm glad you came out to help, Shorty," says she. "Here! Hold these. Isn't that a gorgeous shade?"

"Is it?" says I. "Say, can you lay off that work long enough to put me wise to a few things?"

"Go ahead," says she. "I can talk and answer questions at the same time. What is it that you—"

"Little Doris," says I.

"Why, I don't know any little Doris," says she. "Doris who?"

"The Snell flapper," says I. "Heiress to Chichester Hall."

Sadie nearly dropped the shears. "But she isn't a flapper and she's far from little," says she. "Why, Doris is twenty-five and weighs ten pounds more than I do."

"Well, that's only ten above perfect," says I. "That is, if she's got your height. Has she?"

"You ought to know, Shorty," says she. "Doris was here yesterday afternoon and you saw her."

"What, that husky with the heavy chin and the beefy arms?" says I. "Why, she's built like an apple dumpling!"

"Shorty!" says she, reprov'n. "Of course, she shouldn't wear those sleeveless Egyptian things; but really, she hasn't such a bad figure. And her eyes are wonderful. Didn't you notice them?"

"No," says I. "Nor her ears, nor her nose, nor her teeth. I just walked through the livin' room, remember, and didn't even stop to run the tape over her. What was she doin' here?"

"Doris?" says Sadie, snippin' off another flower stem. "Why, she came over to hear Percy sing. He was practising some new numbers."

"Huh!" says I. "She's fallen for Percy, has she?"

"Who told you that, Shorty?" she demands.

"Never mind," says I. "It's official. But how about Percy? Is he mushy over her?"

"Why, Shorty!" says she. "How unusual for you to be interested in such affairs. What's the idea?"

"Maybe I'm gettin' sentimental," says I. "Anyway, I want the dope on these two. All of it."

That's the cue to give 'em if you want an ear-full. Sadie's no general gossip merchant, and she don't get thrilled over petty neighborhood tales; but when it comes to tunin' in on anything that listens like romance between young folks she

happens to know, she's got the busy bee lookin' like an all day parker on a bench. She loves to match 'em and mate 'em, and if the fam'lies on either side can dig up a little opposition, that only seems to make the game more fascinatin'.

She gives me a full history of Doris. Seems she'd always been a roly-poly, from the time she was a cute little two-year-old with cheek dimples and wrists that looked as if they had a string tied around 'em. At fifteen she could joggle the weighin' machine hand up to 180, and at twenty she'd passed the two-hundred mark. She just kept on gigglin' and eatin' two desserts, and wonderin' why the young fellows didn't take her out canoeing or ask her for dances, same as they did the other girls.

Then, here a couple of years ago, she woke up to the fact that she was a fat girl and that if she ever wanted to be anything better than an also-ran in the Matrimonial Handicap she'd have to make the weight. She hadn't noticed many fat ones being led to the altar. The bitter notioin came home to Doris that the more she sagged down the branch the likelier she was to hang there unplucked.

She liked the boys too, just as much as the thin girls did. She wanted to play around with 'em, and have 'em show her the new fox-trot steps, and be cuddled up in dark corners. But up to date Doris was unhugged and unknissed.

So Doris started to train down. She tried almost everything she heard about, from vinegar baths to the latest diet systems and floor rolling before breakfast. She said good-by to potatoes and butter and she cured herself of the candy habit after a two months' struggle that seemed like a nightmare. But the ounces came off as reluctant as if she was whittlin' a marble slab with a kitchen knife. Finally she got back to about 170, but she was still wide in the hips and she had a face like a full moon. Also she found that she didn't have the knack of gettin' on with the men. She'd missed out on a lot of early practise and she just didn't have the tricks. Besides, the young bunch she'd been brought up with had her listed as excess baggage and wouldn't change her rating.

So Ma Snell, who was gettin' hopeless about her, told Gridley he'd got to take them East, and that's how they came to land up here at Rockhurst-on-the-Sound. But even with Chichester Hall as a background, and after givin' a lot of social stunts, Doris was still on the side lines. And then, as a movie title would put it, came Percy Pillgast into her life.

"Think she wants him, eh?" says I.

Shaking Doris Off the Bough

"It's almost pathetic, Shorty, the way she follows him with her eyes when they're in the same room together," says Sadie. "You see, Percy was rather nice to her that afternoon of the concert when they first met. True, it was only the professional manner which he is cultivating. And he's an observing youth. He has watched stage artists when they were surrounded by admirers and I suppose he's practising so he'll know how to do it when he gets to be a great singer. Anyway, he goes through all the motions—bends over their hands when he bows, whispers confidential compliments in their ears and gazes at them soulful, as if they were the only beings on earth."

"Pulled that on dimpled Doris, did he?" says I.

Sadie nods. "She was his hostess, you know, and I think the big rooms and the two butlers rather impressed Percy," says she. "Doris looked rather well that day. She was in black and her arms were partly covered. Anyway, he was very gallant, and gave her a signed photograph, and patted her hand. Well, all that was new to Doris. It simply went to her head: She's been chasing after him ever since."

"What luck is she havin'?" I asked

Sadie shrugs her shoulders. "Percy hardly notices her," says she.

"What?" says I. "Mean to say the poor simp goes Democratic on a chance like that? Why, she's due to be left a million or so!"

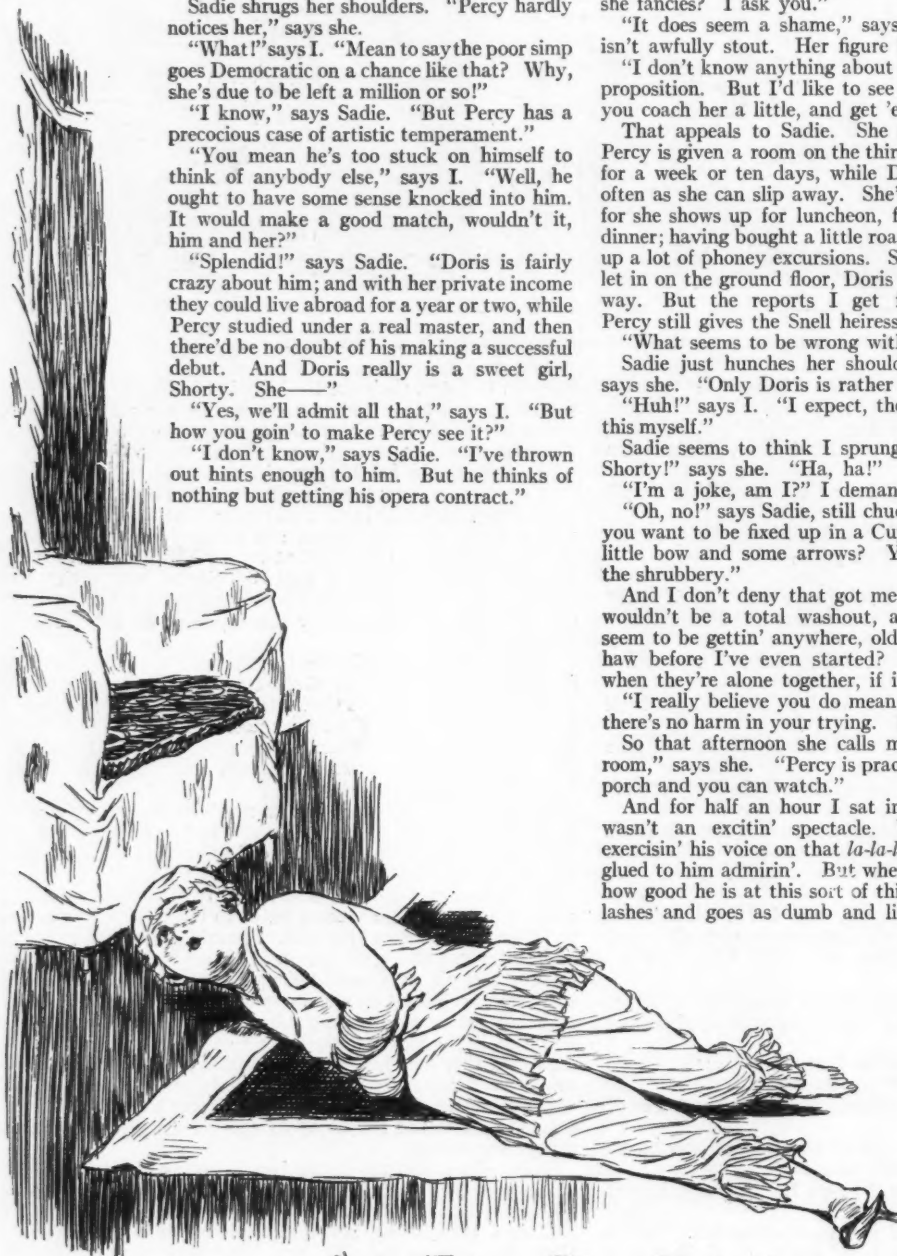
"I know," says Sadie. "But Percy has a precocious case of artistic temperament."

"You mean he's too stuck on himself to think of anybody else," says I. "Well, he ought to have some sense knocked into him. It would make a good match, wouldn't it, him and her?"

"Splendid!" says Sadie. "Doris is fairly crazy about him; and with her private income they could live abroad for a year or two, while Percy studied under a real master, and then there'd be no doubt of his making a successful debut. And Doris really is a sweet girl, Shorty. She—"

"Yes, we'll admit all that," says I. "But how you goin' to make Percy see it?"

"I don't know," says Sadie. "I've thrown out hints enough to him. But he thinks of nothing but getting his opera contract."



So Doris started to train down. She tried almost everything.

"The sap!" says I. "Don't he shine up to Doris at all when she comes trailin' around?"

"He's barely civil to her," says Sadie.

"And you, with all your experience, can't do anything to help it along?"

"Why, Shorty!" says she, gawpin' at me. "I never knew you to be interested in such matters before."

"But this strikes me as a sportin' proposition and I'm takin' the short end," says I. "It's this way—why can't a fat girl have her little whirl at romance as well as the thin ones? Who gave the skinnies a monopoly on tender feelin's? That they're the only ones worth featurin' in a Romeo and Juliet act seems to be the general idea. It's worked up that way in books, on the stage and in the movies. Always some slimsy half-portion of a girl who wins the great big he-man with the wide shoulders and the hand-hewn chin. Ain't it, now?"

"Yes, I suppose it is," says she.

"Well, why can't the rule work both ways?" I asks. "Why can't a husky corn-fed heroine with a two-ply chin and rollin' eyes put the net over some narrow-chested male shrimp that she fancies? I ask you."

"It does seem a shame," says Sadie. "And actually, Doris isn't awfully stout. Her figure isn't at all bad, you know."

"I don't know anything about it," says I, "except the general proposition. But I'd like to see her have a fair chance. Can't you coach her a little, and get 'em together more?"

That appeals to Sadie. She says she will. And she does. Percy is given a room on the third floor and told to stick around for a week or ten days, while Doris is asked to come over as often as she can slip away. She's an ingenious slipper, I'll say, for she shows up for luncheon, for afternoon tea and once for dinner; having bought a little roadster for her own use and faked up a lot of phoney excursions. So if there was anything in being let in on the ground floor, Doris should have had it all her own way. But the reports I get from Sadie ain't encouragin'. Percy still gives the Snell heiress the cold eye."

"What seems to be wrong with the picture?" I asks.

Sadie just hunches her shoulders. "I'm sure I can't tell," says she. "Only Doris is rather shy."

"Huh!" says I. "I expect, then, I'll have to take a hand in this myself."

Sadie seems to think I sprung something humorous. "You, Shorty!" says she. "Ha, ha!"

"I'm a joke, am I?" I demands.

"Oh, no!" says Sadie, still chucklin'. "Not at all. But don't you want to be fixed up in a Cupid costume, with wings and a little bow and some arrows? You'd look cute, hiding behind the shrubbery."

And I don't deny that got me ruddy in the ears. "Maybe I wouldn't be a total washout, at that," says I. "You don't seem to be gettin' anywhere, old dear. Why give me the haw-haw before I've even started? Anyway, I'd like to see 'em when they're alone together, if it can be managed."

"I really believe you do mean it, Shorty," says she. "Well, there's no harm in your trying. I'll arrange for a private view."

So that afternoon she calls me in. "They're in the living room," says she. "Percy is practising. Slip around to the sun porch and you can watch."

And for half an hour I sat in there and piped 'em off. It wasn't an excitin' spectacle. While Percy is at the piano, exercisin' his voice on that *la-la-la* stuff, Doris just has her eyes glued to him admirin'. But when he stops and turns to explain how good he is at this sort of thing, Doris droops her long eyelashes and goes as dumb and lifeless as a cold boiled potato.

She don't play up at all. No wonder Percy acts bored and goes yawny.

He's an insignificant lookin' little peep, with patent-leather hair, a narrow gauge mouth with a peevish droop to it and a complexion like a cheese pie. Course, those full black eyes of his are kind of romantic lookin', I expect. But he has such a smug, self-satisfied air that I just naturally want to kick him whenever we meet. Evidently, though, he looks good to Doris. But she seems to have no faculty for



"Come right over in the corner, you wonderful man, and tell your Doris all about everything."

gettin' her emotions across. She's as stiff and wooden as a figure in a show window. Her case looks hopeless.

And then I remember that little debate I had with Mrs. Snell and how I countered her threat to have me run out of town with one to Gridley that I'd help their Doris get Percy Pillgast. I saw I'd have to get busy if I was goin' to make good on my bluff.

"Well?" says Sadie as I joins her after the inspection.

"She's a dead one, that Doris of yours," says I. "Acts ossified from the beads up. She may be in love, but it has the same

effect on her as an anesthetic. And Percy—say, he's so much wrapped up in himself all he needs is a couple of yellow stamps and a label to go by parcel-post."

"But of course you have something planned to change all that —eh, Shorty?" asks Sadie.

"No," says I. "I gotta do some thinkin'."

"Do you really think you should, so soon after luncheon?" says she, registerin' sarcasm.

I just gives her a mean look and (Continued on page 118)



At first Mayhew foregathered in the evenings with the painters and writers, who met in the little tavern near the piazza—

By W. Somerset Maugham

A Novel in 2 Pages

THE lives of most men are determined by their environment. They accept the circumstances amid which fate has thrown them not only with resignation but even with good will. They are like street cars running contentedly on their rails and they despise the sprightly flivver that dashes in and out of the traffic and speeds so jauntily across the open country.

I respect them; they are good citizens, good husbands and good fathers, and of course somebody has to pay the taxes; but I do not find them exciting. I am fascinated by the men, few enough in all conscience, who take life in their hands and seem to mold it to their own liking. It may be that we have no such thing as free will, but at all events we have the illusion of it. At a cross-road it does seem to us that we might go either to the right or to the left, and the choice once made, it is difficult to see that the whole course of the world's history obliged us to take the turning we did.

I never met a more interesting man than Mayhew. He was a lawyer in Detroit. He was an able and a successful one. By the time he was thirty-five he had a large and lucrative practise, he had amassed a competence and he stood on the threshold of a distinguished career.

He had an acute brain, an attractive personality and uprightness. There was no reason why he should not become, financially or politically, a power in the land.

One evening he was sitting in his club with a group of friends and they were perhaps a little the worse—or the better—for liquor. One of them had recently come from Italy and he told them of a house he had seen at Capri, a house on the hill overlooking the Bay of Naples, with a large and shady garden. He described to them the beauty of the most beautiful island in the Mediterranean.

"It sounds fine," said Mayhew. "Is that house for sale?"

"Everything is for sale in Italy," was the reply.

"Let's send 'em a cable and make an offer for it."

"What in Heaven's name would you do with a house in Capri?" asked one of the others.

"Live in it," said Mayhew.

He sent for a cable form, wrote it out and dispatched it. In a few hours the reply came back. The offer was accepted.

Mayhew was no hypocrite and he made no secret of the fact that he would never have done so wild a thing if he had been sober; but when he was, he did not regret it. He was neither an impulsive nor an emotional man, but a very honest and sincere one. He would never have continued in a course from bravado which he had come to the conclusion was unwise. He made up his mind to do exactly as he had said. He did not care for wealth and he had enough money to live on in Italy. He thought he could do more with life than spend it on composing the trivial quarrels of unimportant people.

He had no definite plan. He merely wanted to get away from a life which had given him all it had to offer. I suppose his friends thought him crazy; some must have done all they could to dissuade him. He arranged his affairs, packed up his furniture and started.

Capri is a gaunt rock of austere outline, bathed in a deep blue sea, but its vineyards, green and smiling, give it a soft and easy grace. It is friendly, remote and debonair. I find it strange that Mayhew should have settled on this lonely island, for I never knew a man more insensible to beauty. I do not know what he sought there—happiness, freedom or merely leisure; I know what he found.

In this place which appeals so extravagantly to the senses, he lived a life entirely of the spirit. For the island is rich with

—on the most beautiful island in the Mediterranean, bathed in a deep blue sea; friendly remote and debonair



Mayhew

historic associations and over it broods always the enigmatic memory of Tiberius the Emperor.

From his windows that overlooked the Bay of Naples, with the noble shape of Vesuvius changing in color with the changing light, Mayhew saw a hundred places which recalled the Romans and the Greeks.

The past began to haunt him. All that he saw for the first time, for he had never been abroad before, excited his fancy; and in his soul stirred the creative imagination. He was a man of energy. Presently he made up his mind to write a history. For some time he looked about for a subject, but at last he decided on the second century of the Roman Empire. It was little known and it seemed to him to offer problems analogous with those of our own day.

He began to collect books and soon he had an immense library. His legal training had taught him to read quickly. He settled down to work.

At first he had been accustomed to foregather in the evenings with the painters, writers, and such like who met in the little tavern near the piazza, but presently he withdrew himself, for his absorption in his studies became more pressing.

At first he had been accustomed to bathe in that bland sea and to take long walks among the pleasant vineyards, but little by little he grudged the time. He only walked then for exercise. He worked harder than he had ever worked as a lawyer in Detroit.

He would start at noon and work all through the night, till the whistle of the little steamer that goes every morning from Capri to Naples told him that it was five o'clock and time to go to bed. His subject opened out before him, vaster and more significant, and he imagined a work which would put him forever beside the great historians of the past.

As the years went by he was to be found seldom in the ways of men. He could be tempted to come out of his house only by a game of chess or the chance of an argument. He loved to set his brains against another's. He was widely read now, not only in history, but in philosophy and science; and he was a skilful controversialist, quick, logical and incisive; but he was humorous and kindly, and he made defeat easy to bear. He never exulted in victory.

When first he came to the island he was a big, brawny fellow, with thick black hair and a black beard, of a powerful physique, but gradually his skin became pale and waxy; he grew thin and frail. It was an odd contradiction in the most logical of men that though a violent materialist, he despised the body. He looked upon it as a vile instrument which he could force to do the spirit's bidding. Neither illness nor lassitude prevented him from going on with his work.

For fourteen years he toiled unremittingly. He made thousands and thousands of notes. He sorted and classified them. He had his subject at his fingers' ends and at last was ready to begin. He sat down to write. He died.

The body which he, the materialist, had treated so contemptuously took its revenge on him.

That vast accumulation of knowledge is lost forever. Vain was the ambition, surely not an ignoble one, to set his name beside those of Gibbon and Mommsen.

His memory is treasured in the hearts of a few friends; fewer, alas, as the years pass on. And to the world he is unknown in death as he was in life.

And yet to me his life is a success. The pattern is good and complete.

He did what he wanted and he died when his goal was in sight and never knew the bitterness of an end achieved.

By ARTHUR S

Persons

A Mystery

*Illustrations by
C. D. Williams*



"You know that Armstrong was murdered?" Reverly asked Lesœur.

The Story So Far:

WHEN Ruth Balfour, as a result of her father's financial reverses, agreed to marry the rich and elderly James Armstrong, she knew on the moment that she could not; she was too much in love with young Benton Reverly. But she was saved from telling Armstrong this because on the very night of her engagement he was killed by a fall from Dyce's Cliff. The coroner's jury brought in a verdict of accident. Subsequently it was found that Armstrong's will, dated two years before, left Ruth his estate and made her his executrix. A year after the accident Ruth became Mrs. Benton Reverly. She told Bent of the Armstrong situation, but he made light of it.

Bent had just gone away on his first business trip after the marriage when Ruth received a visit from a strange bird-like little man named Frank Lacy who hinted that Armstrong had been murdered and who offered Ruth \$10,000 for a certain letter he said had been written by himself to Armstrong. Ruth knew that no such letter was in Armstrong's effects, but Lacy did not believe her. That evening Ruth's young cousin, Dick Balfour, told her of seeing the same man, Frank Lacy, scaling the dangerous face of Dyce's Cliff. Next day Ruth herself visits the cliff. Lacy is there, informs her he is looking for evidence of murder, and again offers to buy the letter.

Dick calls that afternoon, bringing his friend Patrick H. Doyle, a pompous and preposterously dressed but very shrewd person whom he introduces as the greatest detective in the world.

Doyle says that the famous Bryan detective agency is investigating the Armstrong case, and that he is unofficially helping the Bryan man, Sanderson. Also, he bluntly tells her that three men are suspected of murdering Armstrong, one of whom is her husband.

But he adds that he, Doyle, knows Bent is innocent.

Ruth had picked up on Dyce's Head a broken piece of cuff link. Alone in her room, she now finds the missing half in her husband's jewel box.

She is horrified. Was it broken in a struggle with Jim Armstrong in which Bent was engaged? No; she can not believe him a murderer.

Events follow rapidly. First, Ruth discovers among Armstrong's effects a check to one

François Lesœur for \$10,000, and she wonders if this might not be Frank Lacy. It happens that Lesœur is the step-uncle of her own maid, Agnes, who has that afternoon gone home to her aunt because Lesœur has disappeared. Ruth determines to visit Mrs. Lesœur, in the neighboring city.

The latter, a strait-laced New England type, is almost hysterical over her husband's disappearance. She confesses that "Francis" is a shady character, and finally shows Ruth a note he has just received threatening him with what happened to Armstrong. She gives the note to Ruth.

That night Ruth reads the note over the phone to Doyle, who instructs her to hide it under the rug. Against her judgment, she does. Shortly afterward a neighbor, Mrs. Sadie Overholt, calls and begs to stay over night; her husband is away and she is nervous. Ruth is later awakened from sleep by a scream, and finds Mrs. Overholt downstairs. She declares that she herself was waked up by a burglar. Ruth at once lifts the rug and finds the Lesœur letter gone.

Next day Doyle explains that the hiding of the letter was a trick of his to trap Sam Overholt, whom he thinks may be one Mark Harrington, a suspect in the murder. He, Doyle, had himself secretly abstracted the original letter from under the rug, so that the one Mrs. Overholt stole was only a copy.

Bent comes home that afternoon and Ruth rather hysterically relates all that has happened, including the incident of the cuff link, which she had not confessed to Doyle. Bent indignantly denies any knowledge of a broken cuff link. Ruth walks over to his jewel box. The link has disappeared.

Was there incredulity in Bent's eyes, or did brazen defiance lurk in them? These and a score of other questions tortured her mind as she looked at him.

S O M E R S R O C H E

Unknown

Story That Would Puzzle

S H E R L O C K
H O L M E S

BUT INCREDULITY or brazen defiance, whichever it was that gleamed in his eyes, it slowly gave way to sternness.

"I don't like your manner, Ruth," he said. And though his voice was quiet, it seemed almost to deafen her. For between these two had been nothing save love, and all that consideration, those courtesies, that love connotes.

She saw him in anger. It was a controlled wrath, a wrath barely nascent, but it might step into full maturity in a moment. It was a just wrath. That queer imagination of hers, which took her thoughts away from the present into the past or future, and which, bringing an odd light to her eyes, gave her that air of fragility which was the essence of her beauty, was active now.

Bent suddenly became a priest of an ancient faith who had begun to doubt and who was struggling with his unfaith now. His idol had unexpectedly become clayey; his gods were not divine but mortal. What would the priest do? Destroy the idol and renounce his faith? By an actual effort of will she forced her fanciful mind to come back to the moment.

She looked at her husband with eyes from which the mist had cleared. His blue eyes, glinting now; his big kindly mouth grown grim; the firm chin that seemed aggressive to her fears; the big nose; the broad, intelligent forehead; the wide shoulders topping the athlete's figure. All this belonged to her, was part of her, had become the very essence of her. And she had aroused this other self of hers to an emotion that might justly turn to contempt or hatred.

She had always told herself that she was proud. She had never visualized herself pleading for forgiveness, turning tear-wet eyes in supplication to another. Yet now she held out her hands to Bent.

"Don't talk to me that way, please. You hurt me, Bent."

He stared at her. "Don't you imagine that it hurts me to come home and find my wife filled with silly suspicions? Do you think I like it to have my wife tell me that I'm a liar?"

"I didn't," she cried. She was shocked at his speech.

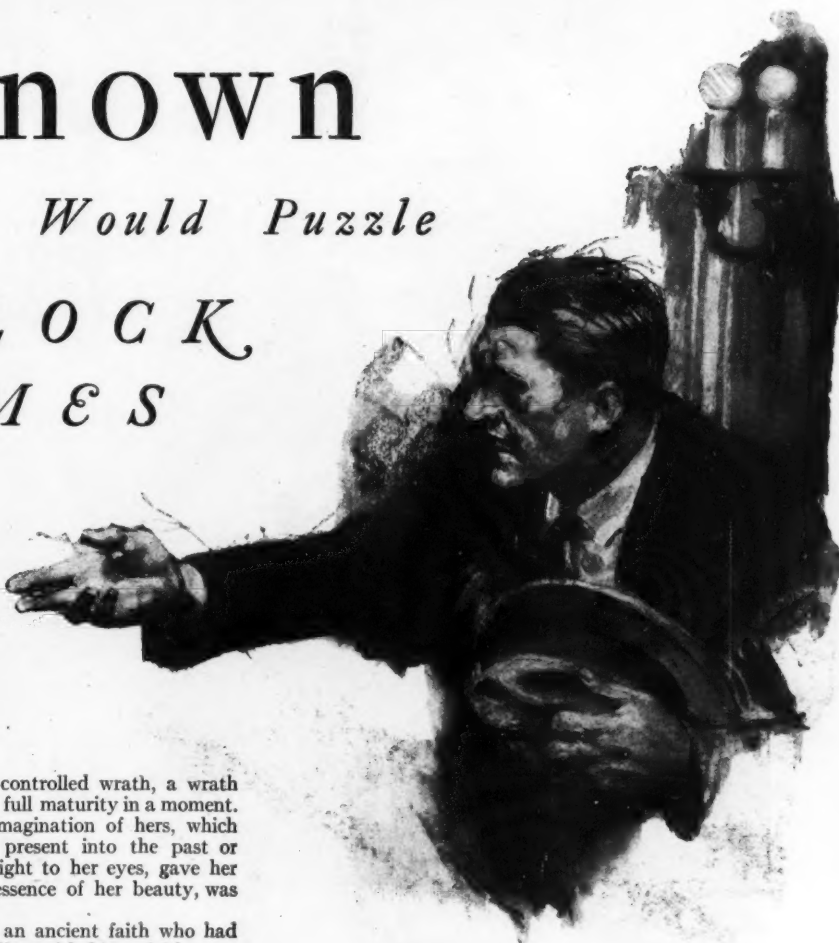
He shrugged his big shoulders. "Not in so many words, but it's a fair inference from what you said," he retorted.

"Then I didn't mean it," she declared.

"Exactly what did you mean?" he asked.

She was helpless before the question. A deeper misery crept into her eyes. She had been so sure that when Bent came home he would banish all fears from her mind, that the discovery of newer fears was insupportable.

The broken cuff link, in the hours following its finding on Dyce's Head, had been the axis around which her terrors had revolved. When she wavered from fear of Patrick H. Doyle to faith in that amazing gentleman, thought of the broken cuff link would send her spinning dizzily back to dread.



"I know the gang that done the murder. That's why I'm scared."

It had been the evidence that could not be glossed over.

Yet the matter was susceptible of so many simple explanations. Reverly had only to state that he had lost the link, the broken part of it, at any time in the remote past. Now that he did not offer this explanation, it occurred to Ruth.

And then she was conscious of a wrath toward Reverly. Why hadn't he offered such an explanation as this? He was quick-witted. It was his duty to drive suspicion from her mind. It was not fair of him to permit thoughts to remain with her when he could dispel them with a word!

But suppose that word must be a lie. And it must be. Even the most quick-witted person, when confronted with evidence of guilt and forced to lie instantly, is likely to choose the clumsier of two obvious falsehoods. The liar must speak quickly, with an effort at naturalness, if he would be believed. He fears that hesitation will convict him of untruth.

Bent, then, had told the first lie that came to him. In order to relieve her fears, he must lie. Therefore he did so clumsily. But before he lied he had taken a certain action. He had removed the damning cuff links from the button box. The links had not been damning until that removal. Now they seemed to form steps that mounted to a gallows, or to an electric chair. Only the most desperate alarm could have made Reverly take such a foolish action, an action which he must know would convict him in her eyes.

Convict him! But of what? Of murder?

The tears that flooded her eyes seemed to make her vision clearer, as though every drop were a microscope which magnified the object at which she looked, enlarging it until she saw flaws invisible to the unaided eye. With this new vision she saw her husband. For the first time in their years of



"I don't recognize your right to put such a question to me, Mr. Sanderson," said Ruth.

acquaintance she noticed a tiny mole on his chin, was aware that one eyebrow was crooked and a little higher than the other, that a tiny line ran from one corner of his mouth down toward his jaw.

But these tears did more than magnify the physical aspect of him. She seemed to read his very soul, and in it she could find no falsity. The body had flaws, countless flaws, which in this moment of revelation rendered it more attractive, lent it hitherto undiscovered charms. But his soul was clean and decent, honest to its uttermost fiber.

He had not lied to her; he could not lie to her! Sound common sense told her that he had been guilty of an untruth, and that untruth conjured up other sins; but sound common sense was the liar, not her husband.

"Bent, once again, forgive me. I didn't mean anything; I've been worried, frightened—Bent, I love you."

Had her life depended on it she would have been unable to repeat to anyone the rest of her speech, or Bent's reply. For she was gathered into his arms again, and for the next half-hour only incoherencies were uttered by them.

Mary, the laundress, substituting for Agnes while the latter stayed with her aunt, Mrs. Lesœur, interrupted the blissful moments. Dick Balfour and Doyle were downstairs.

For a moment depression, bringing with it a physical sensation that was almost nausea, returned to Ruth. But she had made up her mind to believe in her husband, and belief banished fear. A little later, her eyes bright and her cheeks powdered, she descended with him to the living room.

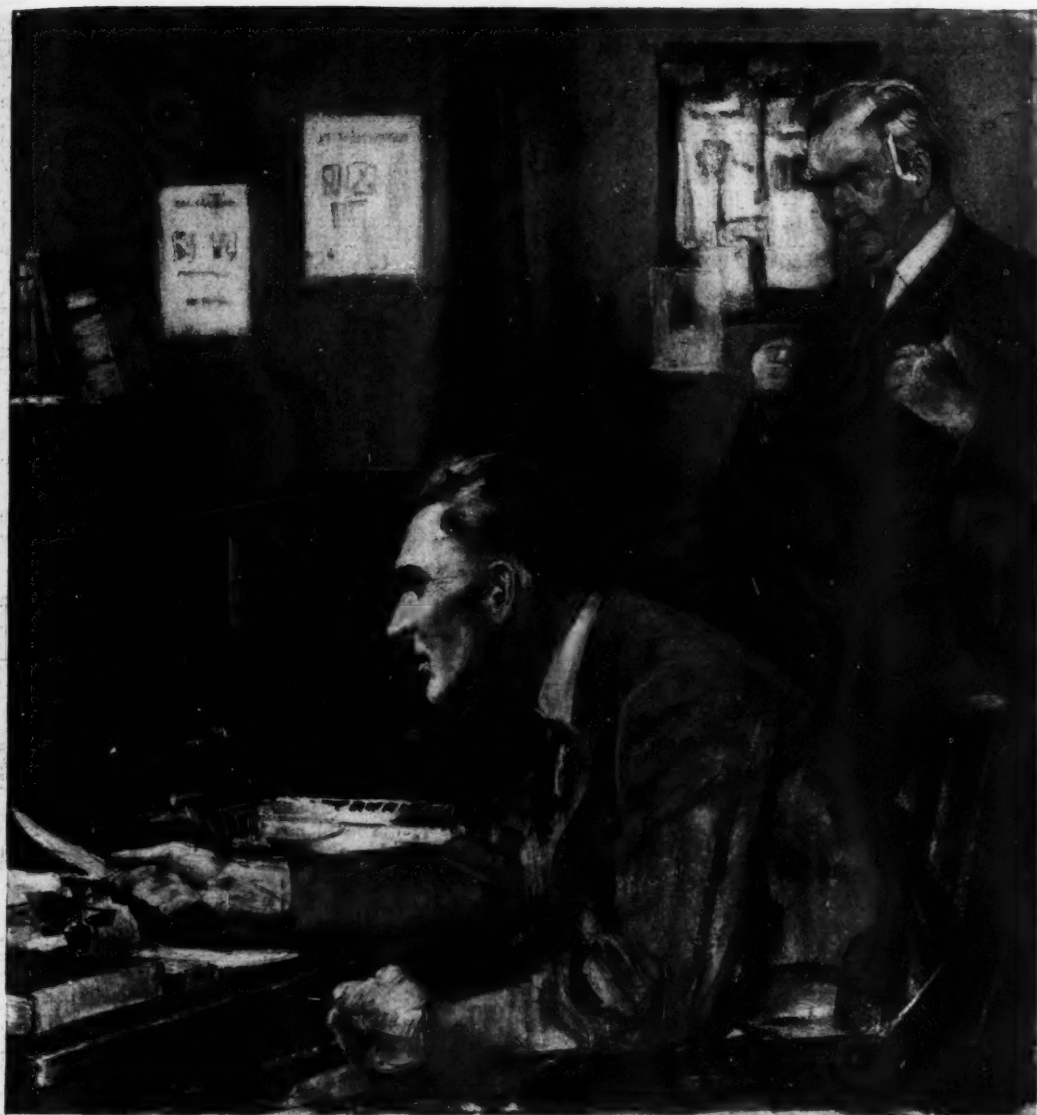
Doyle eyed her keenly as she entered. But she was looking at her husband, wondering what would be the effect upon Reverly at sight of Doyle. She saw mirth leap to Reverly's eyes. This morning the detective's double-breasted jacket, of the amazingly light blue shade, had been buttoned. This evening it was opened, and the world was afforded the opportunity to feast its eyes upon a black and white checked waistcoat that screamed aloud. He still wore the brown shoes and the white spats and the great diamond ring. And the pearl-gray derby was sitting self-consciously upon a chair. But Reverly controlled his desire to laugh. He acknowledged the introduction with grave cordiality.

Dick Balfour frowned at him. "Why don't you say something bright?" he demanded. "Anybody can say, 'How do you do.' But if you met the President, you'd be there with a kick to your speech. You'd want to impress him. And I've been telling Pat what a guy you are. Prove it!"

Reverly smiled good-humoredly at his cousin-in-law. But to his amazement Doyle bristled and frowned at his worshiper.

"You talk like an idiot, Dick," said the detective. "Of course a man would have something bright on tap to say to a President. A President isn't necessarily a man at all out of the ordinary. Another ordinary person can impress him. But a man of common sense knows better than to try to impress Patrick H. Doyle." With hardly a change of tone or a pause he continued, addressing himself to Reverly: "Well, did she believe you?" he demanded.

Reverly flushed. "What do you mean?" he asked.



"You don't have to answer me any more than you have to admit that this is your property."

Doyle sighed elaborately. "You know what I mean, Mr. Reverly. And I took you, at first sight, to be a man of common sense, who'd know better than to fence with me. But if I must talk like a primer, I will. When your wife told you the thing that she didn't tell me, did she believe your explanation?"

The sound that issued from Ruth Reverly's throat could not be called a word. It was a gasp, a primitive sound such as might have been made by some prehistoric ancestress of hers when she was confronted by deadly and unexpected peril.

Doyle beamed upon her. Her gasp was a tribute to him, and Doyle fed upon food to his vanity.

"Certainly, Mrs. Reverly. You didn't think for a minute that you had deceived Patrick H. Doyle?"

Reverly's hands clenched. "I don't like the word 'deceived,' Mr. Doyle."

"I don't like the act," retorted Doyle.

"I don't know what you're talking about," said Ruth, regaining a measure of her self-control.

Patrick H. Doyle endeavored to smooth his lank black hair. He glanced at one of the French windows, but it did not mirror him. He turned the green depths of his sunken eyes upon Ruth.

"This morning, Mrs. Reverly, we were discussing Mrs. Overholt, and you expressed surprise that she would endeavor to shield her husband. I asked you to what lengths you would go to protect yours. You turned white, Mrs. Reverly, and you did not answer. You tried immediately to change the subject. I am no ordinary policeman, Mrs. Reverly. I am Patrick H. Doyle. You are no ordinary woman, to take alarm

at nothing. What you do you have a reason for doing. It was obvious that you were keeping something from me."

He polished the diamond upon his hand with a yellow silk handkerchief embroidered with red daisies. He seemed to wait for someone to challenge his logic. As no one did, he continued:

"It is equally obvious that you have been weeping in the last half-hour. There are many kinds of tears, of joy as well as sorrow. I do not profess to be able always to tell the cause of a woman's tears. Practically always, but not every single time. There are many reasons why you should weep at your husband's return. But among them is just the mere possibility that you wept because your husband's explanation of the thing, or fact, or incident, which you kept from me, was unconvincing."

Reverly stared at him. The grotesque little man, with the sunken eyes that seemed so dull until one caught the gleams of life that flickered in their green depths, grinned complacently.

"Mr. Doyle, you are a very remarkable man."

"I know it," said Doyle. "And perhaps you will be willing to be more frank than your wife."

"I am," said Reverly.

And now, as her husband bade her tell Doyle of the broken cuff link, Ruth hated herself for the doubts that she had held of Bent. For this was proof conclusive of his innocence, the fact that he dared relate to the detective her discovery of the broken link and his own denial of ever having possessed such a thing. "And where it's gone to I can't imagine," finished Reverly. "Ruth saw it, placed the bit she'd found in the grass

in my button box, where she found the other half of it. I don't understand it."

"It's unimportant," said Doyle.

Ruth, looking at him, wondered if he meant it. She knew that her husband was innocent, but was Doyle treating the matter lightly because he was not so convinced of Reverly's lack of guilty connection with the murder of Jim Armstrong? She didn't know why she held this thought. She only knew that every time she had faith in the friendly attitude of Doyle, doubt later destroyed it. Exactly as when she had doubt in his ability, faith later destroyed the doubt. But innocence is safe against all machinations, and her husband was innocent. That knowledge today had brought her, and she thanked God that it had not come from evidence, as such is ordinarily conceived, but from the surer knowledge of the heart.

CHAPTER XI

DOYLE would not stay for dinner. Its announcement came just after the detective had said that the disappearance of the broken cuff link was unimportant. It seemed to Ruth that the hollow-cheeked little man welcomed the opportunity to depart. Herself infected, since Lacy's call upon her, by the detective fever, she knew that, were she Doyle, she would not be content to leave at a time like this. The cuff link seemed to her to have assumed tremendous importance, not because she had found it where she had, but because it had now disappeared.

Yet Doyle said the matter was unimportant. Beyond asking Ruth what she had learned from Mrs. Lesœur, he put no questions. Stating that he had an appointment in Southfield, he made an abrupt departure.

"A queer genius," commented Reverly.

"But a genius, nevertheless," said Dick. "Don't ever forget that. He'll find the murderer of Armstrong."

"If there is such a person," suggested Reverly dryly.

"But all the facts—" began Dick.

Reverly raised his hand. "Not tonight, Dick," he said firmly. "Ruth has been through enough. There's plenty of time for discussion ahead of us. I'm not going to have her excited any more."

The effervescent Dick stifled his curiosity. He admired his cousin's husband tremendously, and, swiftly sympathetic, he understood his present attitude. He stayed to dinner when urged, but took his leave shortly afterward.

Alone with Bent, Ruth looked forward to a resumption of discussion of the mystery. But Reverly shook his head as though he could read her thoughts.

"You're all tired out, dear," he told her. "Not another word about this until tomorrow."

Had anyone else endeavored to silence Ruth at such a time, on such an occasion, she would have become hysterically garrulous. But Reverly was the harbor in which her ship cast anchor. He meant peace to her. And so she obeyed his nod.

She spoke of the hundred and one little domestic details that were of passing interest. He told her of his trip, and said that an accidental meeting on the train to Washington had enabled him to settle the business matter, which had taken him south, en route.

"Sullivan, of Montez and Sullivan, had the next chair to me on the train. I was on my way to see Montez. But Sullivan and I fixed it all up, and I arrived in Washington in time to catch a sleeper back. So I hustled through some business in New York this morning and caught a train for home. And"—he yawned frankly—"I'm dog tired."

"Then you shall go right to bed," she told him.

Into her voice came a maternal note. Reverly grinned delightedly at her. She was so essentially girlish in appearance that maturity seemed a pretense on her part. Not that he underestimated her mentality, but the contrast between her slim youth and her developed mind always tickled him.

"You're tired yourself," he declared. "And tomorrow I intend to give you a stroke a hole, and beat you; so you'd better get rested up."

She laughed at him, and arm in arm they started upstairs. Halfway up to the first landing, they stopped. Someone was ringing the doorbell. Mary was helping the cook with the dinner dishes so Ruth started down the stairs. Her husband passed her and was at the door by the time she reached the near entrance to the living room. She saw him open the door and then seem to be pushed aside, so violently and hastily did the caller enter.

Nor did the man's hasty violence cease with his entrance. He shut the door instantly, before Reverly could utter more than a surprised exclamation. He turned the key in the lock, walked to a window and drew the shade. He stood at one side as he did so, screening himself from possible observation by anyone outside. Then, and only then, did he speak.

"Mr. Doyle here?" he asked. His voice was harsh, with a tremor that might be excitement or might be fear. Ruth stared at him in amazement. Olive-skinned, with hair that was blacker than that of Doyle, with black eyes, and cheek bones and nose that hinted of Indian ancestry, the man had an air of hardness, of reckless desperation, that somehow vaguely reminded her of Lacy. His clothing had a touch of the professional gambler's gaudiness, and his hands, she noticed, were slim and well kept.

He looked at her. "You're Mrs. Reverly?"

Bent answered. "Yes, and I'm Mr. Reverly."

The man sighed with relief. "I wasn't sure but what I'd make a mistake, and a mistake wouldn't be healthy for me just now. Agnes told me the lay of the land, but still—"

"You're her uncle!" cried Ruth.

"François Lesœur, yes'm, that's me. And I want to see Doyle. That's the name of the detective you mentioned to my wife, ain't it?"

"Yes, but he's not here," replied Ruth.

The man's eyes looked hunted. "Will he be here again tonight?" he asked.

"I doubt it," said Reverly.

"Where is he?" asked Lesœur.

Reverly looked at Ruth.

"Do you know where he is stopping?"

"He may be with Dick," she suggested.

"Got a telephone? But of course you have. See if he's there," said Lesœur.

He seemed to Ruth to be afflicted by the same panicky fear that had been so evident in Lacy's manner that morning—could it be only two mornings ago?—when he had first introduced her into the maze of intrigue at whose center lay murder.

Reverly went to the telephone. While he was getting Dick on the phone Lesœur half crouched against a wall. Reverly hung up. "You heard my questions," he said. "Dick says that he believes Doyle is stopping at the Southfield Hotel. But he doesn't know. He hasn't seen him since they were both here before dinner."

Lesœur's olive face whitened. "You ain't got an idea, then, where I can locate him?"

"Balfour suggested, as I've just told you, the Southfield Hotel," replied Reverly.

"And a lot can happen to me on the way to Southfield," exclaimed Lesœur. "I had a talk with my wife—not that I told her anything; I ain't the kind of dumbbell that spills stuff to his wife—but I decided that the best play for me is to come clean. I ain't done nothing, but I know people that have, and it's up to me to find this man Doyle."

"If you're afraid to go to Southfield alone, I'll go with you," suggested Reverly.

Lesœur shook his head. "It's easier to spot two people than one," he declared. "I'll be safer by myself."

"Why couldn't he spend the night here, Bent?" suggested Ruth.

"Of course he can," agreed her husband. He turned to the French-Canadian. "Mr. Doyle will unquestionably be here tomorrow sometime."

The visitor shook his head again. "If I want to be safe, I got to keep moving. Maybe you don't understand—there's a few people that I can send to the chair."

"Who are they?" asked Ruth eagerly.

"Names don't mean nothin'," answered Lesœur. "Especially phoney names. One of them calls himself Mark Harrington. Another is known as Luther Sterling. But those aren't their real names, nor would the other names I can give you mean anything. They might not mean anything to Doyle, but that's his business."

"You know that Armstrong was murdered?" asked Reverly.

"Sure I do; and I know the gang that done the murder. That's why I'm scared; that's why I want to see Doyle," asserted Lesœur.

"But we might see him before you do," said Reverly. "It might help if we were able to tell him in advance the facts you know of."

Over Lesœur's face spread a look of cunning.



"Want to see him? Think you know him?" said Sanderson. "If he is Francois Lesœur—" replied Reverly.

"I ain't telling anybody except Doyle what I know. For all I know you might be Mark Harrington."

Ruth colored.

"That's absurd, Mr. Lesœur."

"And it's kinda absurd finding out, a year after he's quietly buried, that Jim Armstrong was murdered, ain't it? I want to tell you, Mrs. Reverly, that when there's hundreds of thousands of dollars of crooked money involved, nothing ain't absurd. Of course," and his voice became apologetic and his manner cringing, "I don't mean to insinuate anything. I'm just saying that I've kept my mouth shut for twelve months, and when I open it I'm going to be dead sure it's to the right party and no one else. I'm risking my life in talking at all, and when a man risks his life he has a right to take every precaution he can think of. Is that fair, or ain't it?"

It didn't matter whether or not the man's logic was sound. It was obvious that his fears were so great that he would say no more than he had already said. In fact he seemed to repent having been as verbose as this. For he sidled toward the door, as though he had taken a new alarm.

"I'll try to get in touch with Doyle tonight," he said. "You tell him, if he hasn't heard from me when you see him, to go to the Southfield Hotel and stay there until he hears from me. Tell him that nothing else is as important as what I have to say. And tell him not to go looking for me. Tell him to let me pick the spot where we meet. Tell him that he ain't got nothing to lose in this matter but his reputation, but that I stand to lose my life."

As he spoke, his fingers fumbled with the key. As he finished, the door opened and he slipped swiftly through it. Reverly and his wife stared at each other. The husband made a move as

though to follow their late visitor. Ruth seized his arm. "You can't make him talk any more than he has, Bent," she said. She clung to him.

Reverly's face, that had been grave, suddenly relaxed in a smile intended to reassure her.

"Men of his type are apt to exaggerate, Ruth," he told her. "Unquestionably he has important information to give to Doyle, but I don't accept what he says at its face value. He's the type that enjoys creating a sensation, drawing the spotlight to itself." He yawned again, this time almost gustily. "Let's resume our interrupted journey to bed."

"But there is danger if he intends betraying his associates," declared Ruth.

"Perhaps," said Reverly. "And anyway, I couldn't find him now if I went after him. Let's go to bed. And no more talk about this affair! You'll have nightmares and nervous prostration."

And he spoke of other matters as they went to bed. But they were hardly in bed when he began to complain of a raging headache. Nothing would do but that he must dress and go to the drug store.

"Can't Mike go?" objected Ruth.

Reverly shook his head. "I told him that he could have the evening off."

"I don't want you to go," said Ruth.

"Then of course I won't," said Reverly.

And immediately she was sorry that she had put her fears before his suffering.

"Oh, but you must!" she declared. "I'm not a bit afraid."

He laughed at her.

"With Mary and Clara in the house to make a noise that should frighten anyone away, I don't see why you should be. But never mind."

"I do mind; you can take one of the cars and not be out of the house five minutes."

"Exactly what I was figuring," he said.

He leaped from bed, hastily donned his clothes, kissed her, and she heard him, a moment later, slamming the front door behind him.

A minute later she heard the sound of an automobile engine. She heard the swish of the wheels as it turned from their driveway into the main road.

Then there were no sounds save the distant tumbling of the waves at the base of Dyce's Head, and the noises of the insects.

How long he was taking . . . Mentally exhausted, and mental strain inducing intense physical weariness, not even her recent fears at Bent's leaving the house kept her awake.

She did not awake until the next morning. Her first recollection was of Bent's errand to the drug store.

He had not returned before she went to sleep.

She put out a hand and touched his chest. She sighed with relief. She smiled happily. She turned over, and her lips upon his awakened him.

"You were sound asleep when I came in, and I had the deuce's own time not waking you," he said.

"Headache gone?" she asked.

"Got an aspirin tablet, took it, and the pain was gone before I reached home. I feel like a fighting cock. You'll need that stroke a hole."

They were still debating their relative merits as golfers, painstakingly avoiding any reference to the mystery of Armstrong's death, when they finished breakfast. But if Bent's intention had been to ignore all morning the matter that was so tremendously important to them both, that intention was not adhered to. For, as they left the breakfast table, Dick Balfour burst into the house.

"Heard the news?" he cried.

He answered his own question.

"A murder not a hundred yards from your front door last night. A man named Lesœur, according to letters that John Gerlach

found on him. The man, Ruth, whose wife you talked to. Stabbed in the back."

CHAPTER XII

RUTH'S first feeling was not of horror, but of relief. Her hesitation at letting Bent go out last night had not been the silly fear of a bride. Murder had been stalking in the darkness. True, Bent, thinking her objection due to fear for herself, had talked her out of that fear; so successfully that she had gone to sleep before her husband returned. Indeed, she had completely forgotten her nervous apprehension at his departure.

But now, with Balfour's shocking news sounding in her ears, she was conscious of relief that the night had passed and her

husband, safe and sound, was with her. It was a queer sort of feeling, this rejoicing that her husband had escaped a danger which she had no reason to believe had ever threatened him. A shrewd psychologist would have told her that the feeling was due to other fears she entertained, that she believed she had banished by her faith. But there was no psychologist present to analyze her, and had there been one she would have indignantly denied his assertion.

And horror so quickly superseded relief that she was hardly conscious of the existence, in her mind or heart, of the latter.

Lesœur had not impressed himself favorably upon her last night. And the estimates he had previously formed of his character, gathered from the talk of Agnes and Mrs. Lesœur, had not been high.

But he was a human being. Further, whatever his past might have been, he had unquestionably intended to aid the forces of law and order. The fact was that murder had sealed the lips of Lesœur because he threatened to be a witness for the state. The man had justified his existence, and that justification had been his death warrant.

Moreover, the murder of Lesœur permitted the clouds to hang over the Reverly household on a day when Ruth had confidently expected that they would be blown away. All rumors would have been squelched by the testimony of Lesœur.

These were selfish thoughts; she was a normal person, and normality finds its difficulty to look upon events with complete impersonality. Nevertheless, she did feel a wave of sorrow creep over her as she thought of Lesœur's widow, that prim, repressed New England woman in whose spirit dwelt so many contradictions.

And Lesœur himself, though not an admirable person, had been a living, breathing human being when he left her house. What had been his thoughts when the assassin crept up behind him, when he heard the treacherous footsteps, knew what the hot breath upon his cheek portended, felt the icy blade piercing his body?

It was unreal, incredible. She came out of the almost trance-like state in which Balfour's news had put her, to hear her husband saying that he must go down to the Selectmen's office.

"Why?" she protested. She did not know exactly why his statement alarmed her.

Reverly looked at her soothingly, as he might have looked at a child.

"The man was here shortly before his death," he said. "Naturally, what he told us will be of interest to John Gerlach."

Her alarm was definite now. "But that means that all the talk about Jim will become public. The newspapers—"

Reverly shrugged his big shoulders. "We can't let that interfere with our plain duty," he replied. "It's unpleasant, sickeningly unpleasant, but what else is there to do? Besides, newspaper publicity helps in the solution of mysteries like this. But even if it didn't, there'd be no excuse for my failing to see the Sheriff at the first possible opportunity."

"Must I go too?" she asked.

His eyes were commiserating. "I think you'd better."

She offered no further objection, although she shrank from the thought of relating the various (Continued on page 144)



WILLIAM JOHNSTON

ANYBODY'S theories on marriage are interesting. Some of them are important. The views of Crystal Eastman in this issue are both interesting and important.

So, too, I believe are those of William Johnston, which we publish next month. Mr. Johnston, by an article he wrote recently, convinced quite a few of us that it's a mistake not to be fat. Perhaps he may gain some converts to his plan for happiness in marriage. [R. L.]

Frank R. Adams

Presents *A DRAMA in Miniature*

Things As They Are

Illustrations by
H. R. Ballinger

FOR a person of experience plus imagination there are no stories with either happy endings or unhappy endings. On paper the narrative may finish on one note or the other, but who can help wondering what happens a few steps further along in the lives of the persons concerned? What if there should be a footpad waiting around the corner on the path of the lovers who have just plighted their troth? And why isn't it reasonable to suppose that the man who has been wiped out on the stock market will be a millionaire the next week because oil is struck on his hitherto worthless sand flats in Texas?

It happens in life.

After all, the kind of an ending you find in a story depends pretty much on where you stop reading it. As for instance:

"I have come to say good-by to you for always."

At least she had dressed very becomingly for the ceremony.

"What do you mean, 'Good-by for always'?" he asked, not quite shocked yet. Perhaps he was not really paying attention to what she was saying. What man could with such a distracting presence within contact distance of his senses? "Are you going away somewhere?"

"N-n-no—at least not now."

"And neither am I. So there's that. Come here and be kissed."

"That's just what I meant. I'm not going to be kissed any more—at least not by you. That's what I came to say good-by to. I'm never going to let you touch me again—ever. We're going to be just pals."

"Oh!" The exclamation was a combination of amazement and indignation. "You're made up to be a man's pal, then, are you? With that dress on that is so thin that you might just as well not wear anything——"

"Jim!"

"What do you mean, 'Good-by for always'?" Jim asked.

Who do you think I am—Sir Galahad?"

"Aren't you?"

"No. And I'm not even sure that I want to be."

"But you've often said you'd do anything I wanted you to."

"Well, I never thought you'd want me to give you up."

"I don't want you to give me up, Jim. It just seems best, that's all. I rather want to be a nice girl that someone will care to marry some day, and you know just as well as I do that if we keep on playing the way we've been doing, pretty soon I won't be a nice girl any longer. It won't be anybody's fault, but it isn't within the bounds of human nature for it not to happen."

"But Doris dear—I want to marry you."

"I know you do, but we both know you can't, so what are we going to do about it?"

She had let him draw her close and she had to hold his lips away by main force in order to finish her speech. Now she relaxed her powers of resistance and all of her seemed to melt into his embrace. There was a pathetic eagerness with which she gave up which marked the occasion for the last time that it was.

"You see how it is, Jim," she said when he finally released her. "I weaken the moment I am with you. And I don't blame you, either. I suppose I know as well as anyone that I'm the kind of a girl some men like."

"You're adorable," he whispered huskily.

She dimpled. "Thanks for helping me out. I didn't exactly want to say that myself. But if you think so and I am as weak as this the minute you touch me, obviously we must never meet."

He tried to consider her argument sanely. But how could he? He was not even sure that nature intended that they should be sane. "Doris, girl, does it matter much what happens to us in the future? Suppose there shouldn't be any future—suppose this was to be the last day and we had wasted it."

She crept a little closer in his arms but a little further away from his heart. "I'm afraid I like to have you tease me but it's a dissipation I must manage to steel myself to resist. If I were sure this was the last day—" She stopped in mid-speech. "But it isn't. There's never any 'last day' to anything. There isn't even any 'Good-by' because if we should say the words I'm pretty sure they'd keep on echoing forever here." She placed her hand first on her own heart and then on his. Jim caught it and held it there.

"But at least," she continued, "we must keep away from one another. There's no other way," she concluded piteously to forestall the arguments she sensed were springing to his lips.

He could not force himself to say the "Good-by" that she demanded even though he knew that she was doing this to save him from himself and not at all for the selfish reason which she put forward. Selfishness was not a part of Doris's character; she was one of two generous women he had known in his lifetime.

She would not mention the real reason for her decision but they were both as conscious of it as if his wife sat between them in the wheel-chair she had not left for five years.

It was in order to remove temptation from his path that Doris, the rose-lipped, was taking her young body out of his life. So

that in the final accounting he might say "I have not entirely failed of my trust" she was willing bravely to break her heart too.

But to let her go was to lose out of his life every reason for greeting the dawn with a smile, for looking forward eagerly to each tomorrow. He had never realized it before but it was because of Doris that telephones had been invented, just so that he could hear her voice when she was away, that photography had been developed into a fine art and that automobiles had been manufactured which would annihilate the distance between him and her.

She had come in her car to the four corners of forest traffic and he in his. The traffic was only rabbits, squirrels and birds on their way to and from water, worms and nuts; but if you sat quite still it was a noisy throng and sometimes they were tempted to act as crossing policemen and forcibly settle disputes between the squirrels and the birds, who were the ones who argued the loudest over the right of way.

But no one noticed the squirrels or the birds today. Jim Vaine was burning up her loveliness in the furnace of his eyes and her own were bent upon the ground as if she was unable to support the spectacle of starvation in his face.

What a silly little woman she seemed! It was difficult to think of her as actuated by such a rather unprecedented restraint. Blonde hair and baby-blue eyes were not usually the concomitants of sacrifice and high resolve. It was true that her dress was scant and her perfume aura maddening, but who could blame her for wishing to leave a scar on his heart? Feminine instinct must have timidly shown its presence even in the breasts of the martyrs and surely Joan of Arc was careful about the plume on her helmet and the fit of her tin camisole.

Doris was little and not of a noticeably feminine contour. Yet she packed in her slender person a recoil like a soixante quinzé. She really had no right to carry so deadly a weapon without a permit from the chief of police.

"Either you has it or you ain't got it," as the colored garment mangler—in both senses—defined "pussonality." For Jim Vaine, Doris had more than an allure; it amounted to a compulsion. Within sight of her his entire nature changed, inhibiting restraints disappeared, he had no high resolves, no creditable emotions save a yearning tenderness for Doris herself, whom he had no right to touch but did anyway.

Either to be or to adore a person like Doris argues an existence of much unhappiness but with an occasional thrill that rather compensates for being an inhabitant of the lowest pit of Hell all the rest of the time.

At least that was Jim's feelings about her. There didn't seem to be many other wrecks in her path, but maybe her victims hid their anguish under a smile. Or perhaps nature had designed her just to be his chemical reagent, his detonating fuse. Certain it was that he found no difficulty in resisting other women, even those who frankly intimated that they did not expect to be resisted.

But Doris, dear Lord, chained even his dreams and could never be put from out his heart. Everything she did endeared her to him—her slightly naughty clothes that she contradicted so absolutely by her innate sweetness, her, perhaps, unintentionally teasing little tricks that he endured stoically for fear she might stop doing them, her serious watchfulness over his welfare, her

prompt willingness to offer any personal sacrifice in order to make things easier for him.

It was quite beyond the reasonable expectations of any modern man to have found and to be loved by a girl like Doris. Jim marveled to think that the experience had come to him.

And it had all happened too late.

Unless—but Jim, in his most tormented moments, could not contemplate that alternative.

He loved Rose, his wife, as her mother might have done had she lived. It is the only love that can exist between a robust man and a hopeless invalid. Rose was patient, she was grateful; she, too, worshiped him, and if the question of Jim's happiness had ever been put to her squarely she would have suggested releasing him. But the question would never be put to her, that was certain. Jim had only to ask himself "Who would take care of her if I didn't?" to realize how tight was her hold on his conscience and on his respect for himself and his manhood.

Neither woman was ignoble. For that matter, neither was Jim—at least not more so than nine-tenths of his own sex—and the other one. The desperate situations in life are not made by villains but on the contrary by perfectly nice people who get



Jim roamed the streets in a daze. It seemed impossible that the joy of life could so suddenly become pain.



Jim Vaine was burning up the loveliness of Doris in the furnace of his eyes.

tangled up in cross threads of the web of destiny. Einstein says—but never mind that.

So neither Doris nor Jim suggested the only hope that existed for their happiness. To their credit be it said that neither one of them did more than touch upon the idea even subconsciously. Jim knew that Doris, having made her brave stand, could be swayed by his superior will into complaisance with his desires. But suddenly he did not wish to.

He wanted to get away—quickly—while he was still master of himself.

Doris sensed the coming of resolution. "Kiss me good-by, Jim—for always."

He hesitated. "It can never be upon the lips," he decided. "Your hand, dear—and your wrist—"

He brushed them with his lips. "You are right, dear—to be sane I must not see you again."

She looked almost disappointed at his sudden acquiescence in her decision—her defenses were as weak as that—and tears brimmed to her eyes as she swallowed desperately like a child trying not to cry.

It was too much. He swept her into his arms and steadied her trembling lips against his own.

"You'll wait for me?" he asked finally. It was as near as he had ever come to mentioning the forbidden subject.

She nodded her head which was against his coat.

He picked her up bodily and put her into her car.

She was looking straight ahead through her windshield and not at him at all when he started his (Continued on page 106)



SO THIS IS *Merry* *XMAS!*

NEW YORK'S Christmas typifies the city's unyielding pursuit of the sensation. "Peace on earth" double-steps to the merry *hoop-la*. Old Scrooge flings off his garments and profligacy reigns in palace and hutch. Freedom is shackled and souls enslaved for gimcracks and tinsel. Mortgaged homes and pledged salaries strew the path of the reindeer, and the merry peal of bells is muffled by the flood of bills.

Christmas is Manhattan's yearly orgy—the season when the narrow island, bulging with cash, goes on a pyrotechnical bust. The Paris of the Second Empire scarcely surpassed New York's luxurious waste at Yuletide.

The wanton spirit touches every stratum of life from plutocrat to pander. While the Wall Street operator strangles the market to buy his wife a diamond tiara, the underworld thug is black-jacking an innocent to buy a fur coat for his "Moll."

Last Christmas Eve six shining new motor-cars at Rialto stage doors symbolized first-row admiration for chorus girls. And in an orchid corsage lightly tossed from a stage box a thrice-wed star found the deed to a Fifth Avenue home, completely furnished.

Travel the serpentine path of the elevated through the misery and squalor of the kennel-like tenements that stretch on either side, and you see carpetless hovels brilliant with lighted Christmas trees and glittering doo-dads. Poverty's safety valve pops. Santa's mask hides the loan shark.

The war-time phrase "Give until it hurts" is revived and glorified. Simple amenities that characterized the old-time Christmas have been forgotten by the average New York woman in her feverish zeal to make her gift outshine that of her sister. It is not a spirit of giving—but of gouging.

A high-light on the magnificent waste may be seen in the receipts of a Fifth Avenue florist. His average daily sales amounted to \$1200. The day before last Christmas they totaled the stupendous sum of \$38,000 for rare flowers that perished in a few days. And this is only one florist shop in hundreds.

As a challenging contrast, on last Christmas morning the newspapers told of a forlorn East Side mother who, unable to

provide a single potted geranium for an anemic child, stuffed the tenement door and window cracks and turned on the gas.

While the boy in the red prairie cottage is thrilling to the bag of gumdrops, the orange in the net bag and the new pair of shoes, the New York youth is pouting because his stumpy new roadster hasn't a siren attachment.

The Christmas rush in New York begins around the first of November. Shops and stores blaze with sudden splendor. Window displays mark a high tide of lavish show. In one, a papier-maché horse, life-size, trots along a country road with a sleigh filled with wax figures, while snow-clad hills roll past in the background.

In another window a complete marionette show—revealing the night before Christmas in a peaceful village. The town constable patrolling the streets, children saying their prayers, delivery wagons running to and fro, and finally the arrival of Santa with his reindeers and pack of toys.

The toy stores are tokens of the extravagant spirit. There is one on Fifth Avenue where one may buy dolls that talk, walk and skip the rope for prices that range from \$90 to \$500. Doll baby carriages for \$85, doll houses for \$275 and kid gloves for dolls at \$6 a pair.

And for the boy—electric trains in which he may ride and carry passengers over bridges, through tunnels, up inclines and down grades. Price, \$1500. Stuffed animals—zebras, elephants, monkeys—that are priced from \$75 to \$150. All these are toys soon to be discarded.

Into one toy store last Christmas there came an Oregon lumberman flushed from the fruits of a big business deal. He was leading by the hand a tattered little gutter urchin of the East Side.

"Give this little shaver a nice toy," he said.

"Something for about a dollar?" said the clerk, appraising the lad.

"Hell's bells, no!" was the retort. "The finest you got in the house." And the youngster went back to the East Side with an electric toy automobile that cost the lumberman six one-hundred-dollar bills.



A Pen Etching by O. O. MCINTYRE

Illustration by P. L. Crosby

The poor children, incidentally, find their Christmas toyland at the curb toy market that bubbles on lower Sixth Avenue. Here the ten-cent mechanical toys buzz and hum in eccentric circles and dashes. It is the one spot in New York where the sidewalk vendors are not molested by the police.

About the only remaining touch of the old time Christmas spirit is expressed at the community tree in Madison Square, where on Christmas Eve the public is invited to sing Christmas carols and join in the pæans of thanksgiving.

Ultra-rich New York finishes its shopping the week before Christmas and then hies away to Lakewood or mountain retreat to spend its Yuletide in exclusive solitude.

For them it is a jeweled Christmas—a Christmas of pearls, diamonds and pigeon-blood rubies. Without this jeweled splurge the huge jewelry establishments could hardly be maintained throughout the year.

One millionaire last year purchased three ropes of pearls that totaled nearly a million dollars.

A stroll through these gilded establishments reveals the superlative luxury for the rich. Gold and silver cigarette cases for ladies, with tiny music box attachments, that range from \$500 to \$700. Wrist watches for \$1000 up to \$4000. Diamond bracelets as high as \$50,000. A hat pin for \$6000.

And in the perfume shops, delicately blended languorous odors from Araby for \$6 a single drop.

For the men, the haberdashers display exclusively designed scarves from \$8 to \$10. Walking sticks from \$60 to \$300. Cuff links for \$200. Monogrammed handkerchiefs at \$75 the half-dozen.

No city is so "victimized" by Christmas as New York. The hat-snatchers, door-openers, elevator operators, traffic policemen, carriage starters, bus conductors, news venders, waiters and head waiters expect and exact their toll.

This polite form of sandbagging is a tax on fear—the inherent New Yorkish "fear of the uniform." They know if they do not remember at Christmas those who are paid to serve them they will be snubbed throughout the year. A New Yorker who lives in a hotel wrote a letter to a newspaper three weeks after

last Christmas and confessed he spent \$320 providing Christmas gifts for members of his family and \$480 "tribute" to the uniformed myrmidons he had regularly tipped throughout the past twelve months. "Either that or a year of discomfort," he sadly confessed.

This gentle gyperry is not confined to hotels, but office buildings, clubs, railroad terminals and apartment houses indulge in it as well.

No class of people make so much of Christmas as the sentimental people of the stage. For them it is a season of lay-offs and half-salaries, but each purse is strained to provide gifts for fellow players.

There are continual rounds of holiday festivities at the Lambs, Friars, Green Room Club and N. V. A.—impromptu skits, cheering bowls, sleighrides in Central Park and visits to the bedside of Nellie Revell, their official dispenser of cheer, who was in a plaster cast for nearly four years.

Tightfisted New York becomes generously openhearted with the coming of holly wreaths. Newspaper drives to aid the poor receive a ready response—thousands upon thousands are hurled into the charity coffers. New York does not forget its straggling breadline.

King Alcohol is not neglected! Bootleggers are swamped with orders. It is the high tide of the year for them, for New York must have its Christmas champagne at any cost. Next to its women, the metropolis pays its biggest tribute to alcohol at the Christmas season.

And long after the clock strikes twelve on Christmas night—the weary army of nerve-racked shop girls, clerks and floor-walkers slink to the drab brownstone boarding-houses to sleep the clock around. It has not been nor never will be a Christmas for them. It has been just a killing grind.

This is the ugly halo of the New York Christmas. In its lust for pleasure it is indifferent to the heart-throb. It will gladly toss a \$500 bill in a charity hat, but it will not remove the thorns in the path of the huge body of workers who give their strength to make Christmas happy.

It is a city of last-minute shoppers.

By James Oliver Curwood

A New Story of

The

Illustrations by



AN ATTITUDE of unusual caution and a haunted way of looking about him were the two things one would have noticed first in the mysterious stranger as he came out of the swamp into the open forest of white pine. He drew in a deep breath of the freer air, and with a gesture of relief wiped his face with a hand that was rough and twisted and scratched by contact with briars. He was oddly disheveled and smeared with swamp oil. His gray head with its grizzled and uncut hair wore no hat, his shirt was in rags at the throat and sleeves and his trousers were tucked into high boots which bore evidence of having gone through mud and water to their tops. Upon his shoulders he carried a pack, and though the tenuity of its folds emphasized its lightness in weight, the man freed himself from his burden with an audible gasp of relief.

Then he leaned against a pine and looked back at the swamp from which he had come, listening with singular intentness for any sound which might strike with warning or unusual import upon the languorous stillness of the August afternoon. His face was pallid under its stubble of beard even after the heat and exertion he had passed through; his cheeks were sunken as if by sickness or hunger, and his lips were drawn and thin. In his eyes seemed to lie all the strength that remained in the man. They were furtive and questing, missing no shadow that moved.

The sweetness of ripened summer, its lazy whisperings and the stillness which comes in a deep wood when the sun is overhead lay about him or trembled softly in the air. For hours he had

and again he plunged his face into hands filled with cold water and wet his head until his gray hair was dripping.

He followed the brook. Several times he stumbled and fell in the rougher places and once his toe caught in a root and he plunged into the stream itself. At the end of an hour he had traveled a mile. Then he came to a knoll of hardwoods, crossed it and made his way down through a lacework of yellow birch until he arrived at the edge of a deep, still pond that began in sunlight and lost itself in the almost cavernous coolness and shadow of a spruce and cedar forest. Instinctively the man knew it was a beaver pond, and almost instantly he had proof it was alive. A warning tail lashed the water with the sound of a paddle struck sideways, a hollow splash came from the direction of the dam, and across the pool, a short stone's throw away, an object moved through the water.

Dizzily the man sat down. His vision was clouded so that it was difficult for him to see even the moving object. He fell upon his side and stretched himself out on a couch of thick green grass. In another moment he was lying with his eyes closed but with ears keenly alert. During the next half-hour he heard every sound about him; then his pale eyelids closed heavily and a weariness of brain and body which he could no longer combat dulled his senses to a physical and mental inertness which was almost sleep.

In this state of somnolence he had lain for possibly a quarter of an hour when a sound reached his ears which first opened

been in an oven of swamp heat and winged pests; here it was cool. In the pine tops a hundred and fifty feet above his head was a faint stir of the breeze that came from Lake Superior. It reached down and touched his hot cheeks. He could taste the invigorating freshness of it, and there came slowly a change in his restless eyes, a softening of the tense lines about his mouth, a lighting up of his face where before it had held only suspense and watchful uncertainty. He picked up his shoulder pack, carrying it in his hand as he turned away from the swamp.

The transformation in the man's face was strangely at odds with the painful physical effort which accompanied his tedious progress. He no longer looked behind him but kept his eyes ahead, as if anticipating at any moment the appearance of something of vital importance toward which he was struggling with the last bit of strength that remained in his body. When at last he came to a little brook gurgling between the pine roots he fell rather than knelt beside it, and drank like one dying of thirst. Then again

A Gentleman of Courage Broken Man

Robert W. Stewart

his eyes and then brought him in a quick and defensive movement to a posture that was half sitting and half crouching.

The sound came again, and amazement replaced the alarm in his face. What he heard was a feminine voice, strangely soft and subdued in this place of coolness and shadow and mysterious stillness. It was a note of laughter, almost birdlike in its sweetness, and the man's fingers clutched at the breast of his ragged shirt as he listened. Then he began to crawl slowly in the direction of the sound, making his way through a green thicket of willows, careful that no twig snapped under his weight to give warning of his approach. Suddenly he came upon a scene whose unexpectedness was almost a shock to him.

He had reached the farther edge of the willows, and before him was a little meadow not more than half an acre in extent, green and filled with wild flowers. Almost within reach of his hands was a mountain ash weighted with ripening fruit, and under this tree, close to the edge of the pool, a girl was seated on the grass, partly facing him. His first glimpse of her was of a bowed head crowned by a wealth of coiled hair; then, as she looked up, he saw her face. Her cheeks were flushed, her dark eyes shone, and as she laughed again she snuggled her face close down over a furry thing scrambling about in her lap. The man saw there were two of these creatures—baby beavers. His eyes wandered a little. At the edge of the pond, half out of the water, was a full grown beaver. And this older inhabitant of the place was conscious of his presence in the willow thicket!

The girl was talking and laughing with the little ones, calling them by name. One was Telesphore and the other Peterkin—and the man drew in his breath with a sudden sharp gasp. He watched her tease them with a big yellow carrot. One scrambled up and tangled a foot in her hair.

"Peterkin!" she cried. "Peterkin—you little ruffian!"

The old beaver remained stolid and motionless, watching the menace in the willows. A companion swam lazily past, scented the danger and struck the water a blow with his tail before he dove.

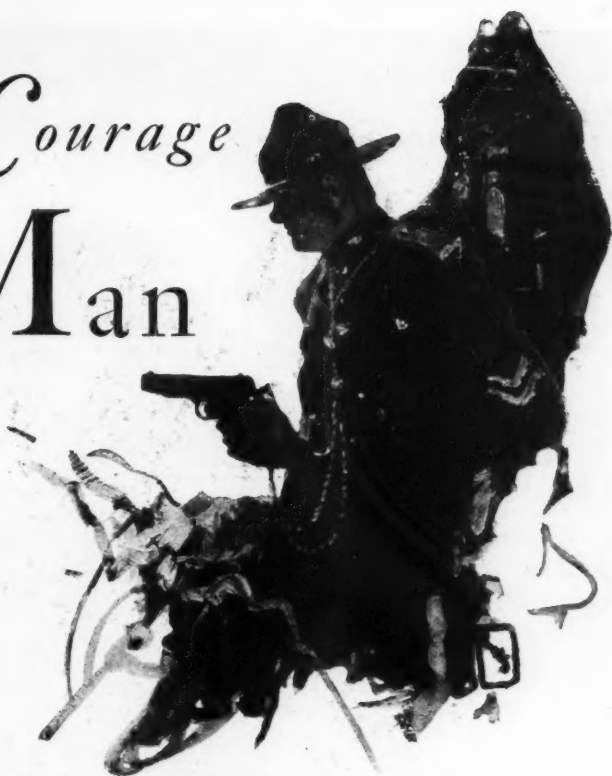
The girl looked up quickly and spoke to the old beaver. "What is the matter, Peter?" she cried. "Don't be foolish. Come and get your carrot!"

It was then she heard a little cry behind her, and turned and saw the man's face in the willows.

Mona Guyon was not afraid. She was startled, and thrilled by an instant intuitive sensing of the unusual and the significant in the man's unexpected appearance. Yet the color did not leave her cheeks or a cry come to her lips. She thrust the baby beavers from her lap and rose unexcitedly to her feet, tall, slim and amazingly beautiful.

She was looking steadily at the man, and as she looked her heart beat a little faster, for the wilderness had taught her a quick and definite understanding of the story she saw written in the wild face among the willows. Its tragedy flashed upon her before her parted lips had found words—hunger, sickness, the emaciation and weakness of a man who found less discomfort upon his hands and knees than upon his feet.

As she looked at him a change came into his face that the man himself could feel as there swept over him a slow and inundating sense of shame. Every instinct of chivalry in him revolted at the ridiculous and alarming figure he must be making



One thought pounded in Peter's brain—in the first hour of his father's return, this beast had come into their lives again.

of himself. But even in this moment of surprise and distress he did not entirely lose his sense of humor. He tried to smile. The effort was nothing short of pathos.

"I beg your pardon," he said as he rose a little unevenly to his feet and came out of the willows. His raggedness and the coarse stubble on his face could not conceal the consciousness of pride with which he straightened himself and bowed to her. "I have come upon you like a wolf, and I know I look like a wolf. But I assure you I am as harmless as a sheep, and if you don't mind dividing your carrots with me—" He nodded toward the little yellow pile of carrots she had brought for her beaver pets.

His voice was pleasant. It made her think of Father Albanel over at Five Fingers, and as he spoke a smile was in his eyes and on his pale lips. She went quickly to his side and put a hand on his arm. Its firm young touch seemed to steady him.

"What has happened?" she asked. "You look—"

"Sick—and a little mad," he finished for her, when she hesitated. "But I'm mostly hungry, and if I may have the carrots—"

She helped him to the foot of the tree and he dropped down beside it with a weakness that made him hunch his shoulders in disgust.

"I have something better than carrots," she said. "Please sit here and I will get it."

She hurried across the little meadow to a deeper shade of thick growing jackpines on the farther side, and the man turned his head to follow her movements with his eyes. Her beauty was twisting at something in his heart. A long time ago he had known someone like her. The slim figure walking swiftly across the open took him back twenty years, and he could almost hear a sweet voice calling his name, and in a place very much like this, with the coolness of the wilderness all about and the sun shining through the trees. His hand touched the scrub of beard on his face and he shivered. The thought came to him that the girl was afraid of him and was running away. As she disappeared among the banksians he reached for one of the raw carrots and began to eat it.

Mona returned so quietly that he did not hear her until she was at his side. She brought a basket and a small pail of cold spring water. She spread a napkin on his lap and loaded it with the contents of the basket. He was sensitively conscious of her eyes upon him and tried not to appear ravenous as he began with meat and bread.



"I was here," said Mona, "when in this vision your father came—ragged, tired and sick."

"I'm spoiling your picnic, child," he said, speaking to her like a man who was very old. "I'm sorry."

"You're not spoiling it," she cried, with a gesture full of sweet tenderness. "Oh, I have been so happy today—God has made me happier by bringing me here in time to help you!"

"Happy," he whispered, as if to himself. "It is wonderful to be happy. I have known—what it is."

It was her struggle to appear natural now as he ate. She had never been so intimately close to starvation and pathos and

weakness in man. If he had been younger, the experience would not have gripped her so chokingly.

"Were you lost?" she asked.

He caught quickly at her suggestion. "Yes, lost—in the woods and the swamps between the railroad and here. I was trying to find a place called Five Fingers."

She gave a little exclamation.

"I'm from Five Fingers. It is not far. Uncle Pierre calls it a mile and a half."

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Mona wondered at the silence which came over him, and the suddenness with which his hunger seemed to be satisfied.

"You have been an angel to me," he said, when he had finished. "And—things love you. Even the wild creatures." He was looking at the baby beavers, humped into furry balls at the edge of the pond. "You called one of them Peterkin, and the old beaver Peter. I wonder why?"

"And there is a bear cub I call Pete," she added. "It is because—"

"Yes—"

Her eyes were shining.

"Because I am going to marry a boy whose name is Peter."

It did not seem strange to her that she should be confessing the secret of her happiness to a man she had never seen before. There was something in his eyes which made her want him to know, a mysterious gentleness that seemed to plead for her confidence and her friendship. It gave her a pleasurable thrill to tell someone that she loved Peter and was going to be his wife. And this man was unlike any other who had ever come from the outside world into the wilderness isolation of Five Fingers. In his rags and misfortune and his whitening hair and pale, thin face she saw something which stirred more than her pity. And it was more than faith. Just what it was she did not know. She was puzzled by the tremor which ran through him coincident with her mention of Peter.

"And this Peter—" he began feverishly. The words seemed to choke in his throat, and he passed a hand over his eyes as if to wipe away a mist. Then he said: "He is a lucky lad. Is his name Peter McRae?"

"Yes. How did you know?"

"And—you love him?"

She nodded. "I was only thirteen then, but I loved him the first day he came to Five Fingers and fought Aleck Curry for me. Aleck was a bully and was pulling my hair."

The mysterious stranger bent his gray head so that she could not see his face. "That was five years ago last May, in the afternoon. And—Peter—did he ever tell you about—his father?"

"Yes, that same night. It was in the edge of the forest, and it was growing dark. He had brought a letter from his father to Simon McQuarrie, and Simon had told him the truth. He said his father had killed a man—accidentally—a long time ago, but that the police wouldn't believe it was an accident and were after him, and would hang him if he was caught. And ever since then—" She was at his side, staring at him as he slowly raised his head, the color gone from her face and her white throat beating with the sudden mad pounding in her breast. "Ever since that night—that very hour—we have prayed together for Peter's father to come back! And you—you—"

He could not escape the wild questioning in her eyes and their demand to be answered.

"Would you have me Peter's father?" he asked uncertainly. "This way—an outlaw—ragged—dirty—a beggar—" There was an almost tragic note of hopefulness in his voice.

"Yes!" she cried, her voice breaking in excited entreaty from her lips. "If you are Peter's father, tell me. We have waited. And I have told him you would come. Oh, I have promised him that, and have asked God every night to make it come true! Are you—" Her hands were reaching out to him.

"Yes, I am Peter's father."

There was no flash of joy or pride in his acknowledgment of the truth. His head sank upon his breast as if a sudden weariness had overcome him, and a moan of protest was in his voice. And then a thing happened which swept the bitterness and grief from Donald McRae's heart. He caught a glimpse of Mona's face, gloriously flushed in this moment of her answered prayer; and then her arms were about him, her soft cheek against his rough

stubble of beard, and for an instant he felt the swift pressure of her lips against his. He raised his hand and touched her hair.

"Child," he cried brokenly, "dear child—"

She sprang up from him, half laughing and half sobbing, and ran out from under the mountain ash tree and stood in the

edge of the clearing. With her hands in the form of a megaphone she called, "Peter—Peter—O Peter!"

With a protesting cry he climbed to his feet and went to her. She saw the white, almost frightened look in his face and eyes. "Don't do that!" he exclaimed. "For Heaven's sake—don't! Peter must not know I am here."

In her amazement her hands fell slowly from her face to her side. "Why?" she demanded.

"Because—" He stopped, listening to a voice that came faintly from out of the forest.

"That is Peter," said Mona. "We are going to eat our picnic supper here—at the pool."

"It is Peter—coming—"

"Yes."

He tried to breathe steadily, tried to speak calmly as he took her hand and stroked it with nervous gentleness.

"What is your name?"

"Mona Guyon."

"Mona—Guyon. It is a pretty name. And you are sweet and good and beautiful. Peter's mother was like you. And—I am glad you love my boy." A new strength seemed to possess him.

The voice came again out of the forest, nearer this time, and Donald McRae held the girl's hand closer, and a tremor went through him as he smiled at her in the way he used to smile at his boy in the old days of their comradeship and happiness.

"That is my call," he said unevenly. "Peter's mother and I used it twenty years ago, and afterward I taught it to Peter. It carries a long distance in the woods."

It was not his poverty and his weakness that affected Mona most. Something more than pity overwhelmed her—his forced calmness, the strange light in his eyes, the almost superhuman fight he was making to rise up out of his rags and his misery in the most tragic of hours that could have come into his life. His words and his appearance set her heart pounding fiercely. She was a little frightened and wanted to put her arms about him again and hold him until Peter came. What did he mean?

"Why mustn't Peter know you are here?" she demanded. "Why?"

He led her back in the willows. In a moment they were hidden.

"Are you brave enough to hear? And do you love Peter enough to help—me?" he asked her.

"Yes, yes, I will help you."

He stood so that he could look out of the willows and across the meadow through which Peter would come. A moment of despair and hopelessness twisted the muscles of his face.

"He must not see me," he said in a voice that was hardly more than a strained whisper. "Child, you must understand—you must of all. Don't you know why I ran away from Peter that day near Five Fingers, and sent him on to Simon McQuarrie?"

Mona: "I think I must have had a dream, and it was terrible!"



It was so Peter might have a chance in life that he never could have with me, even if I escaped the law. I, too, have prayed—every day and every night through years that have been more than eternities for me; prayed that good and happiness might come to him, and that in time even the memory of his father would wear away. But never for an instant have I been able to forget my boy. He has been a part of my soul and body, walking with me, sleeping with me, sitting with me beside my hidden campfires at night, until at times the desire to see him once more was so strong in me that it almost drove me mad. And all this time I was hunted, running from place to place, living in swamps and hidden depths of the forests, avoiding men and places of habitation—but with Peter always at my side, just as he looked that last terrible day at the edge of Five Fingers when he pleaded with me to take him along—

His lips trembled and a shiver ran through his body.

"And through those years Peter *was* with you—Peter and I," replied the girl. "Summer nights we used to ask the moon where you were, and when it was cold and stormy we—we prayed. And on Christmas—Peter always got a present—for *you*."

Donald McRae put his arms about her and a joyous light passed over his haggard face. "You thought of me—on Christmas?"

"Yes, always. And Peter asked me to keep the presents carefully in my cedar chest, for we knew you would come back some day. And now—"

It was Peter's voice that came to them again, much nearer. Donald's arms fell away from the girl, but she raised her face quickly and kissed him. Her eyes were filled with tears.

"Peter is wondering why I do not answer. Please—please—"

In his indecision he bowed his face in his hands. It was with an effort that he shook himself free of temptation.

"I must tell you quickly, and you must understand," he said desperately. "The police are close after me again. That is why I was in the great swamp to the north—to get away from them. If I come back into Peter's life now it can be only for a few hours, and you know what it will mean—a fresh tragedy for him, a new grief, pain, disgrace, a black cloud of unhappiness over the paradise which you have made and can make for him. I have come back to see him, to look at him, to carry away a new picture of him in my heart. But he must not know. And if you love Peter—if you care a little for what is in the heart of his father—you will make it

possible for me to look upon my boy. I will hide here, in the willows; and you two, there under the ash tree—"

"It is wrong," broke in Mona. "Oh, it is terribly wrong!"

"No, it is right," he persisted. "It will make me happy—to see him so near to me, hear his voice and know that life and God and *you* have been good to him. If I see Peter, child; if his hands touch me, if we are together again—it may cost me my life. For those things would hold me; I could not go away again after that, and the police are near, very near, and if they should catch me—"

The sag that came into his shoulders gave eloquence to the thing which he did not finish, and Mona's eyes burned with a fire which dried up her tears. "If I bring Peter down there, under the tree, will you promise not to go away until I have seen you again?" she asked.

"Yes, I promise that."

"Even if it is tomorrow, or the next day?"

"I will wait."

It was hard for him to lie, looking into the beautiful eyes that were fixed upon him so steadily. But he did it splendidly; so well that Mona did not guess the falsehood back of his last great fight.

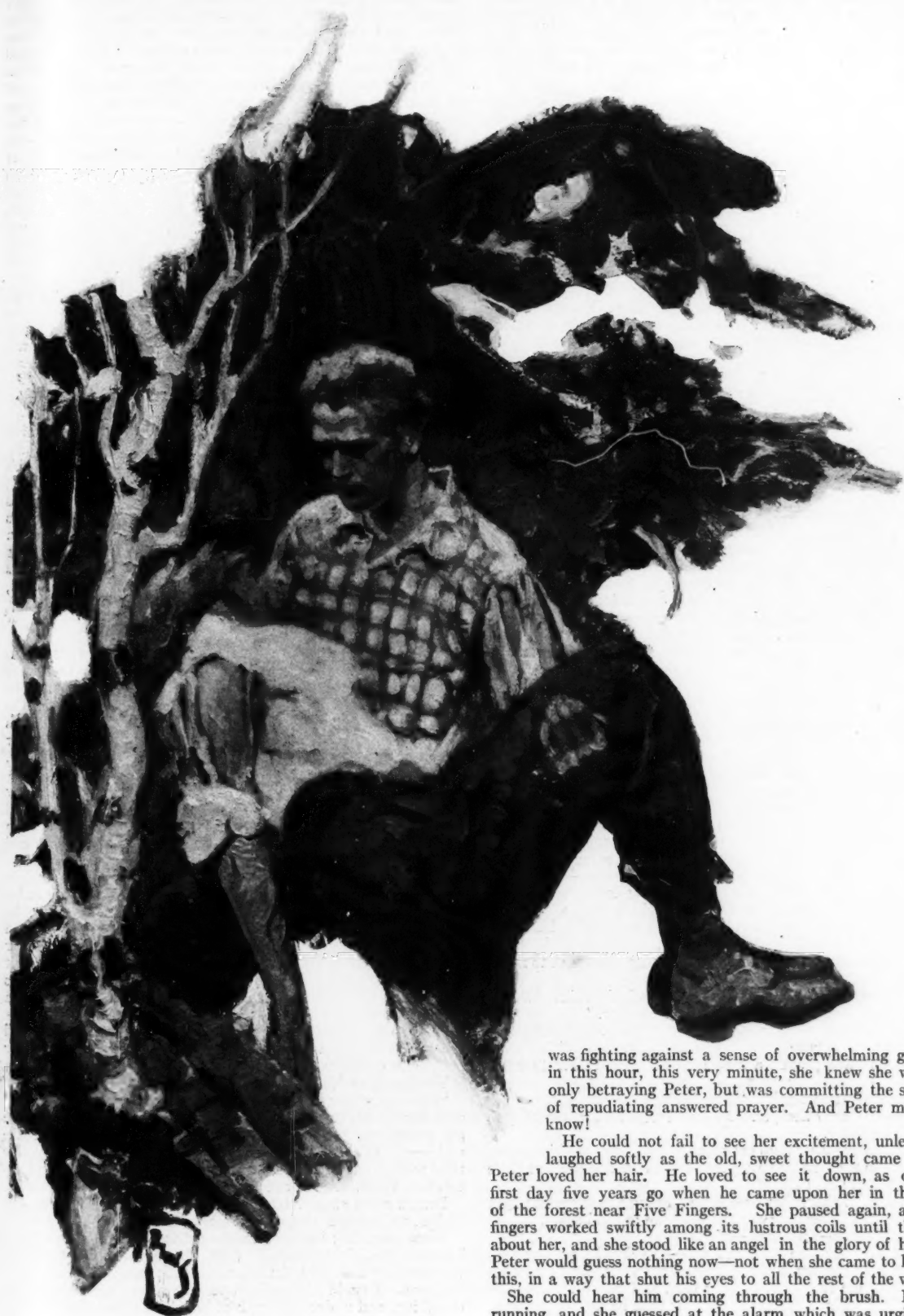
She turned from him swiftly, with her face toward the meadow.

"I will bring Peter—down there," she said.

She ran to the mountain ash tree and in a few breathless seconds rearranged the luncheon basket and tossed half eaten bits of food into the pond. Then she hurried across the meadow. Peter's call came to her again, and this time she answered it. In the deep shade on the farther side of the meadow she stopped and pressed her hands to her face. Her cheeks were hot. She



"We must hurry, Peter," urged Mona. "We must get your father away—where he is safe—where he cannot be found!"



was fighting against a sense of overwhelming guilt, for in this hour, this very minute, she knew she was not only betraying Peter, but was committing the sacrilege of repudiating answered prayer. And Peter must not know!

He could not fail to see her excitement, unless—she laughed softly as the old, sweet thought came to her. Peter loved her hair. He loved to see it down, as on that first day five years ago when he came upon her in the edge of the forest near Five Fingers. She paused again, and her fingers worked swiftly among its lustrous coils until they fell about her, and she stood like an angel in the glory of her hair. Peter would guess nothing now—not when she came to him like this, in a way that shut his eyes to all the rest of the world.

She could hear him coming through the brush. He was running, and she guessed at the alarm which was urging him because she had failed to answer his calls until that last time, when she knew her voice had not sent forth the old cry in just the way it should have greeted Peter. She stood very still,

so that when Peter leaped over a fallen tree not twenty paces away from her he did not see her. He stopped, his head thrown back, breathing quickly, and listening; and in this moment Mona recalled the other day of years ago when he came into the cutting near Five Fingers and found her struggling with Aleck Curry, the bully of the settlement.

He was the same Peter, only now he was a man. His hair had not darkened and his eyes were the same blue. He was the clean-cut, fearless, sensitive Peter who had gone into battle for her against a boy nearly twice his weight and years older. The years had given a splendid change to his body. He was still slim, like the old Peter, and there was a liteness and alertness in him which filled her with pride. She held her breath, watching him, and exulted when she saw the anxiety in his face. Then he called again, and in the moment of silence which followed she suddenly clapped her hands and laughed.

Peter turned in amazement, and when he saw her standing as she was, with her long hair streaming about her, he drew in a deep breath, and the blood surged into his tense face as he came to her. The happiness which swept his anxiety away brought a responsive glow of joy into her eyes, and as she held out her arms to him she forgot for a moment the man hidden among the willows near the mountain ash tree. For a little while Peter held her so close she could feel the thumping of his heart, and not until he had kissed her hair and her lips did he seem to have breath to ask why she had not answered his calls.

"To punish you for making me wait so long at the pond," she said. "But"—she raised a soft tress to his lips—"I was sorry at the last moment, and did *this* for you, Peter. So will you forgive me?"

She was thinking of Donald McRae again, and slipping her hand into Peter's she led him toward the pond. And Peter, in the sweetness and joy of her presence, guessed nothing because her fingers tightened in his hand or because her breath came more quickly than usual. They drew nearer to the ash tree and the willows. She knew that Donald McRae was now looking upon the face of his boy; she could see the clump of twisted bushes behind which he was hidden, and caught a movement in their tops, as if an animal or a breath of wind had disturbed them.

They were under the ash tree when she flung back her hair, no longer making an effort to hide from Peter the distress in her face. He was shocked, even a little terrified at her appearance. Involuntarily her glance went beyond him to the thicket which concealed Donald McRae. It was only a few steps away, and she knew Peter's father could distinctly hear what they said. Then she looked at Peter again, and smiled gently at his suspense as she raised one of his hands to her lips in the soft caress that always wiped away his troubles. And in that same moment she drew him a step nearer to the willows.

"Something happened before you came," she said, speaking so that Donald McRae would not lose a word of what she was saying. "I think I must have had a—a dream—and it was terrible!" She shuddered, and listened to the breaking of a twig in the willows. "I am foolish to let it frighten me."

His arms were about her, his fingers smoothing back her shining hair as relief leaped into his face.

"You were asleep, Ange—with me bursting my throat to make you hear from the forest?"

She did not answer his question. Instead, she said: "Peter, you have not lied to me? You believe in prayer?"

He bent his lips to her white forehead. "Yes, Ange, and yours most of all. God has answered you, and always will."

"And we have prayed a long time for your father to come back?"

He nodded wonderingly. "Yes, a long time."

She spoke slowly then, and her words were for Donald McRae and not for Peter.

"And if your father does not come, if you never see him again, your faith in the God we have prayed to for so long will be a little broken, will it not, Peter?"

She waited, holding her breath for fear even that sound might come between Peter's answer and the man in the bushes.

"He will come—some day—Mona."

"That was what he promised you—the day he sent you on alone to Five Fingers, and ran away from you? And you have always told me that next to your faith in God you believed in your father. You have never thought that he lied to you that day in the edge of the forest?"

He stared at her, speechless, and in that moment she faced the willows with a glow of triumph in her eyes.

"Down in the little church at Five Fingers Father Albanel has always taught us not to lie and to be true to our promise," she

said, speaking directly at the willows. "Peter, if your father should break his faith, or I should break mine, it would be terrible. And that is what happened—in my vision—and it has frightened me." She rested her cheek against his arm so he could not see her face. "I was here—under the tree—when in this vision your father came. He was ragged and tired and sick—and so hungry he ate carrots I brought for the beavers. He had come just to look at you, Peter, but not to let you know. He said it would make you unhappy; that it was best for you that he should never come into your life again—and he made me promise not to tell you that he was here. And I promised. I did—I promised him I would be a traitor to you, after all the years we have waited for him, and prayed for him, and *believed* in him." Her arms crept up to his shoulders. "If I should do a thing like that God would never forgive me, and you—if some day you found out what I had done—would never have faith in me again. Would you?"

She hid her face against his shoulder, her heart beating wildly, her body trembling. For she had seen another movement in the willows and she was afraid that Donald McRae was going away.

"It was only a dream," Peter was saying, holding his arms closely about her. "You are not afraid of dreams, Mona?"

And then from behind them came a voice.

"God forgive me my weakness," it cried. "Peter—Peter—"

Donald McRae stood out in the open at the edge of the willow thicket. He had forgotten the rags and mud that covered him, and was no longer a fugitive with the lines of a hunted man in his face. The present was for a space obliterated—the present with its menace of the law, its exhaustion and poverty; and he was standing once more in the warm glow of that day of five years ago when he had said good-by to Peter. In those seconds when Peter stood shocked into deathlike stillness by the sound of the voice behind him, Mona could see Donald McRae with his outreaching arms; but as Peter turned slowly, facing his father, the strain broke in a hot flood of tears that blinded her vision.

And then—

"Dad!"

It was the strangest cry she had ever heard from Peter's lips, and with an answer to that cry in her own choking breast she turned away as the two men came into each other's arms. She passed out of sight along the edge of the pond, scarcely seeing the path ahead of her, and unconsciously she kept repeating Peter's name in a whisper, as if—even though she had prayed so long for this hour to come—she had never quite expected its fulfillment.

Under the ash tree, for a few moments Peter was the boy again—the boy of yesterday, of years ago, when the world had held nothing for him but his father; and there was no change in the touch of the hands that had always given him comfort and courage and a love that was almost like a woman's in its gentleness. Not until Donald McRae held his boy off, with a hand on each shoulder, did something besides the madness of joy at his father's homecoming begin to thrust itself upon Peter. Then he saw the change—the naked breast, the half bared arms, the mud and rags, and the face and hair in which years had stamped their heels un pityingly. He tried to choke back his horror, to keep it out of his face, and to do this he laughed—laughed through tears and sobbing breath—and pointed to a white birch tree in which a bluejay was screaming.

"The bluejay, dad!" he cried. "Remember that day—behind the log—with the bluejay in the tree top, and the sapsucker pecking at our elbows, and the violets between my knees—"

The hands on his shoulders were relaxing.

"I've never seen a bluejay but what I've thought—of you," said Donald McRae. "And the river—behind us—and how we got away from the police—and the rabbits we roasted—and—"

The world was twisting and turning round again. He tried to smile, and reached out gropingly for Peter. "The swamp was hot, Peter. And I am tired—tired—"

Peter's arms caught him as he swayed. His thin face was whiter, and his eyes closed as he still tried to smile at his boy.

Mona, braiding her hair as she waited beyond the willows, heard Peter's frightened call. When she came running to him he was kneeling beside his father, cooling his face with water from the pond. Donald McRae lay upon the grass. He was scarcely breathing, and under the scrub of beard his emaciated face was like wax. An agony of fear and grief had driven the happiness out of Peter's face, and he tried to speak as he looked up at Mona.

She saw what had happened as she knelt beside him and took Donald McRae's head tenderly in her arms. Excitement and his last great effort to fight down his

(Continued on page 102)



MARION DAVIES as Yolanda with Ralph Graves as Maximilian of Hapsburg (above) and Lyn Harding as King Charles the Rash (below) in "Yolanda," a new Cosmopolitan film of the romantic fifteenth century.



LORRAINE MANVILLE, who will be remembered as a solo dancer at the Metropolitan Opera House and later with "The Blue Kitten," and whose singing and dancing talent will grace a new musical comedy this season.

PHOTOGRAPH BY GEORGE TRAXER, NEW YORK



HELENA D'ALGY, who was born in Madrid, headed her own Spanish Opera Company in Buenos Aires, and is now with the Ziegfeld "Follies," to be featured as soon as she has learned the language of these States.

PHOTOGRAPH BY WHITE STUDIO



NANCY CARROLL, a fascinating Irish beauty with the kind of blue eyes and Titian hair you read about, who is making herself a reputation in her first appearance on the stage—in "The Passing Show of 1923."

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By Royal Brown

The
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Story
of a Girl
who
Hesitates
between a
Long-Haired Poet
and a
Young Go-Getter

LOVE

(With Revised Rules)

Illustrations by
Charles D. Mitchell



"I thought," interposed Peg, "that you wanted to have your poems copied—"
"Darn the poems. I come here hungry, athirst—"

EVEN before Shane Lemoyne came into the picture, Peg Colgate had occasioned her parents moments of perturbation, even of alarm. This was inevitable. Peg—slim, lovely, valiantly young—had been born to trouble men as the corners of her pretty mouth quirked upward. At sixteen she had celebrated her escape from childhood by shingling her hair and going back to short skirts. From then on the stream of masculine contemporaries had begun to flow through the not inhospitable portals of the Colgate home until, according to her father, it was a wonder the front door was not swung off its hinges.

Fortunately, Peg's father had a sense of humor which, though it was to fail him utterly when Shane Lemoyne appeared, was still serving him well then.

"I might, I suppose," he had suggested to Peg, "have the present door removed and a revolving one put in."

"You needn't bother on my account," retorted Peg serenely. "I don't ask them to come."

And that was the truth. She never made any apparent effort to allure. Rather did she tease and torment, scorn and snub her victims, treating even the more favored with the same camaraderie she had always accorded Tommy Lane, the inevitable boy next door, with whom she had played competitively from the time he was six and she not more than three.

Even she, however, could not treat Shane Lemoyne that way. He was different. Astonishingly so. Peg admitted it, to herself. As for her parents!

They were congenitally cordial, exceedingly well established folk of what would have been termed middle age and middle class before these descriptive phrases were banished from the language. They made an honest effort to be modern and broad-minded, and they almost believed they were—until Peg caused

them to catch their breath anew. She did that frequently, but never so alarmingly as when she introduced Shane Lemoyne to them—or presented them to Shane Lemoyne, just which they were never sure.

Shane Lemoyne had ever the manner of royalty condescending to commoners. He was supremely arrogant and self-assured. Even with Peg. As for her parents, he accepted them as a biological necessity which he could wholly ignore. This he did, once the conventions he so palpably scorned had been attended to. They were less fortunate.

"I knew," wailed her mother for the fortieth time, "that something like this would happen when we let Peg have her way about going into business."

They had let her have her way about that just as Canute finally decided to humor the sea and let it come in after all. "I think," Peg announced to her mother just after her graduation from high school, "that I'll go to business college next fall and study stenog and typewriting."

"Study stenography!" her mother had echoed, as shocked as if Peg had suggested a head-hunting expedition to Borneo. "Why, your father can give you everything a girl could want. You have no idea what business is like!"

To which Peg might have retorted that neither had her mother and that that was exactly what she meant to find out. But wisely she kept still.

"You will meet all kinds of men!" her mother had gone on.

"That's what I'm hoping"—still to herself, fortunately.

"You are too young to know very much about life or men!"

"I wonder if she really believes that," thought Peg, who, though only eighteen, felt sure she could give her mother pointers on both.

"And I think," her mother added, "that if you will only stop and consider the matter, I can safely leave the result to your good sense."

"Thank you, sweetest," Peg had answered. "It's perfectly ducky of you to be so sensible about it. Lots of mothers would have kicked up an awful fuss and forbade me to think of it."

This was exactly what her mother believed she had been doing. But—well, what could she do with Peg?

"I'll have no chance to pass judgment on your men friends," her mother wailed. "And I think I should know who they are—"

"I'll bring all the nice ones home to meet you," Peg had assured her. And she had. Or at least they came. All through the next four years.

"I don't see how you keep track of them all," remarked her father one morning at the breakfast table.

Peg glanced up, the soft April sunshine touching her bright hair. "Modern business methods," she replied airily. "Card catalogues and cross indexes. Application forms must be filled out in full and are attended to in turn. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified as promptly as possible and their references returned—"

Mildred was Peg's partner. Employed together in the office where Peg had found a place for herself after graduating from business college, they had been bitten with the idea of branching out as public stenographers. They had been solemnly warned of disaster but had gone ahead nevertheless.

"And," Peg pained, "although I won't be able to buy myself a limousine this year, neither am I on my way over the hill to the poorhouse, as kind friends prophesied!"

The suspicion that times had changed and that Peg was very much the product of a new era dawned upon her parents anew.

"Girls nowadays are more interested in careers than marriage," her father assured her mother. "I sometimes wonder if with a girl like Peg too many suitors aren't as bad as none. She's spoiled for marriage."

It was this false sense of security that the advent of Shane Lemoyne shattered.

They seemed to know very little about Shane Lemoyne, yet from the very beginning they knew more than was good for their peace of mind. Of his antecedents, for instance, they knew nothing until after they received the telegram which, announcing Peg's marriage, sent her mother into hysterics. But the man himself! There was no escaping certain facts that he so freely gave forth.

He was, by personal proclamation, a scorner of all social conventions. He was also a poet with, as he put it, nothing published to his discredit. And to boot, he was a valiant Sinn Feiner prevented by some obscure cause from shedding his life blood on the field of battle.

He was, in the Colgates' experience and even in Peg's, unique. "You interest me," he told Peg, frankly and without preface, two minutes after he saw her first.

They met in Peg's office. Shane Lemoyne, as a poet, scorned publication—but was not above having copies of his poems typed, with six carbons of each.

"You flatter me," retorted Peg. And added, in her most businesslike manner: "We can't get these out for you today. If you are in a hurry, perhaps Miss Merten on the fourth floor—"

"You are essentially feminine and so you evade me," he accused. "I tell you you interest me. I want to see more of you. I must!"

"Must?" she repeated, eyes and voice satirical.

"At once! Alone!"

"I'm sorry—but I have no private office yet."

"You know what I mean!" His voice grew impatient. He was a genius—and genius is ever imperial in its demands. "I want to talk to you—"

"I thought," interposed Peg smoothly, though she felt quite thrilled—a public stenographer seldom has customers who conduct themselves this way—"that you wanted to have your poems copied—"

"Hang the poems!" he exploded, which was hardly his usual estimate of his product. "I come here hungry, athirst—"

"But why select a public stenographer's office, then?"

Lemoyne gave her a glance, mingling annoyance and reproach. "Athirst for something undefinable! I find you—"

"Ever so busy," Peg broke in. "I'm sorry, but—"

"Where do you live?" he demanded abruptly.

"Are you asking permission to call?"

"No, I am going to call. I think it was so written in the beginning. I, Shane Lemoyne, will come to you—"

He realized he did not know her name and so paused expectantly.

"Mildred Barbour," supplied Peg wickedly. "Seven seventy-nine Oakland Street—"

"Tonight!" he finished, and strode magnificently from the room.

Mildred Barbour shot across the office.

"Egypt's Queen!" she gasped. "What is he—a maniac?"

"No—only a poet. He demanded my name and address, declaring that I'm something indefinable—I hope it's complimentary—and said that he would call tonight."

"Peg Colgate! You didn't give him your address!"

"No—I gave him yours!"

"You didn't! You—just for that I'll tell him where you do live!"

"I don't care. I never had a poet call before. Rich man, poor man, beggar—"

"Let me see his poems," demanded Mildred, snatching at them.

One glance at the uppermost sheet left her eyes widened until they were as round as any saucers the potter's art ever fashioned. "They—why, they don't even make sense!" she protested. "He is an escaped lunatic. He'll probably shoot you or something—"

"'Poet Shoots Public Stenographer.' What a lovely headline—and won't the family be pleased! Let me see what his poetry is like."

She read the first few lines. Then: "Gosh!" she murmured.

Peg and her parents were at dinner when the front door-bell rang. The maid answered this and an instant later the dining room door was flung open.

"You are cruel! Cruel!" charged Shane Lemoyne, as his eyes found Peg. "But I am here nevertheless. You may try to elude me, but you can't escape me! I walked the streets for hours, centuries, eons. And then for other hours, centuries, eons, I sat in that despicable living room waiting for you! And then, after waiting, I discovered that you had deliberately misled me! How could you?"

This Peg chose to ignore. She was ever so good at ignoring, at odd moments.

"Then you haven't had your dinner," she suggested, as if all this were the most natural thing in the world. "Shan't we set a place for you—"

"Dinner!" He spat the word out as if she had insulted him. "I tell you that I must talk to you. Alone!"

It occurred to Peg that he was right—the conversation had better be pursued where they could be alone. She rose, but she paused to say: "My father—my mother, Mr. Lemoyne."

"How—how do you do," murmured her mother, as fascinated as a bird by a serpent.

Peg's father said nothing. He merely swallowed, hard. As for Shane:

"Well," he flung at Peg, when she faced him in the living room, "I've called. Are the conventions satisfied?"

"Shattered, I should say!"

"You haven't any idea how I hate conventions. They shackle free souls. You call on a girl. She introduces you to her parents. Why? They appraise you as a possible suitor. Why? Must a man who calls on a girl marry her—"

"Several have called on me and escaped," Peg broke in.

It was only when she broke in that she had a chance to speak all evening. And, for the most part, he ignored her interruptions. He was a human volcano, pouring out a lava of language on her.

"I know. I know," he would assure her, cutting her short. "You are conventional. You cannot help it. I am a free soul. I come to you as such. But you—you think of your parents. A brook can be dammed. But can you dam Niagara? You may blow out a candle. But can you blow out the sun?"

Peg couldn't. But at eleven she could suggest that, assuming he was the sun, it was long past his bedtime. He found himself at the door, his hat in his hand. Peg might never have met his like, but she was skilful in strategy.

"I do not know," he announced, in parting, "whether your appeal is physical, spiritual or mental. I feel as if I could never rest until I found out. I think I shall walk and walk until I can come to you again—"

"I think you had better go home to bed."

"Bed! Home! I have no home!"



"As your friend and well-wisher, Peg, I advise you to snap Lemoyne up. He's a bargain at any price."

For a second she almost believed he was literally homeless. But then she understood. He merely meant that such as he might have shelter but that a free soul could never have a home.

"Good night, anyway," she said, and shutting the door upon him, stood there recovering her breath. "Gosh!" she murmured. "And I've got to face the family yet!"

There was no question about it. Her father plainly felt that explanations were in order and was determined to have them.

"He is a poet," Peg told him. "And they're sort of impetuous sometimes."

"Impetuous!" he exploded. "Why, he acted like an insane person! What did he want of you?"

"Oh, we're typing some of his poems," replied Peg evasively.

"And you know how poets are about such things."

"Do you mean that that is all he does for a living?"

"I'm sure I don't know. I really hardly know him." Peg yawned like a sleepy kitten. "Mind if I go to bed? I've had rather a hard day of it." To which she might have added that even to one as experienced as she in the ways of man, she had led a still harder evening.

"It's just what I expected," her mother wailed, after she had gone to bed. "I have tried, Heaven knows, to be patient and sympathetic, but this is too much!"

"It's enough, anyway," agreed Peg's father grimly. "Lord knows I've never interfered before, but the next time that young man calls I intend to be present!"

And so he was. For Shane Lemoyne and he breakfasted together the very next morning. Peg, the first to descend, found Shane in the reception room.

"Egypt's Queen!" she gasped. "Didn't you go home, after all?"

"You are as beautiful as I remember!" he purred joyously. "It seems incredible, but you are!"

"Who let you in and where have you been?" she demanded sternly.

"I walked all night. Then I came here and waited. The maid let me in—"

"This can't go on!" interrupted Peg. "I—"

"You are right. It can't go on," he agreed tragically. "I am being torn, twisted, tormented, tortured—"

"You'll feel better after you've had a cup of coffee," interposed Peg hastily—it was a case, plainly, for diplomacy or the police.

So it was that Peg's father discovered them, a few minutes later, at the breakfast table. He stopped and stared incredulously. The habit of a lifetime dropped from him. His cordiality froze and his manner was as chill as the north wind. But the net result was only an attack of indigestion for himself.

Shane remained oblivious to a silence that should have stung. He alone felt no sense of tension.

"Handle me gently, I feel absolutely fragile," announced Peg as she greeted Mildred that morning. "Do I look as if I'd aged years? Is my hair turning white?"

"What did your family say?"

"Please don't mention the family. I'm not sure I have any longer."

"Peg Colgate! If you don't tell me this very instant just what he did I'll—I'll fall to the floor and have fits at your feet."

Peg's response to her partner's appeal was both humanitarian and immediate. But all the thanks she got was:

"Peg Colgate! You're making it up!"

"I wish I were! I had a heart-to-heart talk with the young man on the way to business and I think he'll behave better now."



But I hardly dare face the family. Will you give me shelter if they put me out?"

"It must have been an awful dose for them," commented Mildred. "But what are you going to do about him? Aren't you scared? I would be!"

Even so, there was a touch of envy in her voice. She was shocked, yet thrilled. Peg was amused—and thrilled. With all due apologies to Kipling, there are two women who will forgive a man any crime he may commit. One is his mother. The other is the woman for love of whom he forged, robbed, murdered or broke all the thousand and one social commandments.

And no woman, not even Peg's mother, could deny Shane a certain charm. Peg's mother said she couldn't see what Peg



"You know and I know" (proclaimed Shane) "I know and you know, they know and I know, they know and they know, you know and you know—"

saw in him. But in her heart she knew. He was the personification of the mad romance which every woman dreams of all her days. And so she feared, distrusted and hated him the more.

As for Peg, there were moments when she felt like a birch swayed by a strong wind. Shane Lemoyne was like that. There was about him a certain irresistibility. Even Peg's father felt it, though in him it produced a futile rage and a smoldering impulse to do murder—or rather, justifiable homicide. He did make an effort to fulfill his promise to put Shane in his place.

"I believe," he announced, "that you are a poet."

"I sometimes almost succeed in so persuading myself," retorted Shane.

"Have you ever succeeded in so persuading others?"

"The effort has never seemed to me worth while."

"I take it, then, that you do not depend upon poetry as a means of livelihood?"

"One might as well ask a woman to sell herself, and call that love, as to expect a poet to subordinate his God-given creative instinct to a commercial end and call it art!"

Peg's father flushed ruddily. In his day a prospective suitor had believed it the better part of valor to court the family of his heart's desire.

"Mr. Lemoyne was just about to read a poem, dad," Peg announced hastily. "Not one of his, but one written by Gertrude Stein. She is to poetry what—"

"What Mattise is to art," supplied Shane, as Peg paused at a loss. Which meant no more to Peg's father than—well, than it did to Peg herself.

But it suggested a line on this young man, and so he said: "Please don't let me interrupt you, then."

And Shane began to read the poetry of Gertrude Stein.

Shane's voice was beautiful and he used it well. And as he quoted from memory that which he proclaimed as poetry, he was like a young priest performing a solemn rite. His eyes grew mystic and his face inspired.

"A part of two. When I was in the dark of two, how do you do, how do you not do that. How do you do industrially.

I can reasonably be in him. Be in him.

How do you do industrially.

I can reasonably be in him—"

In spite of himself, Peg's father blinked incredulously and his mouth popped open. It seemed to him the most infernal gibberish he had ever heard. A horrible suspicion that Shane was deliberately making it up as he went along, mocking him, caused him to flush anew.

"Is that supposed to be poetry?" he cut in peremptorily.

Shane stopped short, turning an outraged face toward the offender. And Peg's father felt like a weird bug being classified.

"If you mean poetry in the sense of Kipling, Wordsworth, Keats and other perpetrators of nursery rhymes, no!" Shane thundered. "It's too big for that."

"It has been published," Peg inserted hurriedly. "And it really is considered very fine!"

(Continued on page 110)

By ALBERT PAYSON TERHUNE
One of the Most Interesting Men I've Ever Known

Chicken Smith

Illustration by W. D. Stevens

HE WAS a stubby little gray man with a stubby little gray beard. Everyone around Pompton knew him as "Chicken Smith." I doubt if he had any more birthright to one of these two names than to the other. He had earned the nickname of "Chicken" by breeding and fighting a lot of gamecocks.

He used to act as guide for amateur sportsmen during the brief hunting season. His only other visible means of support was the \$100 a year he collected for carrying the mailbag on foot twice a day to and from the Pompton railroad station to the old Pompton post-office, a mile off. Yet always he was in funds. Always his dogs and gamecocks and guns were the best to be bought.

His speech and manner were those of the slovenliest stage countryman. He had lived at Pompton since long before I was born, and he was part of the region's local color.

I was sixteen years old. I had flunked my entrance examinations for Greek at Columbia. Wherefore, I had to study during vacation. I tramped down to the post-office one morning, books in hand, and stood at the counter in front of the window while the mailbag's contents were rifled and sorted by the one clerk, and the postcards laboriously read. Standing beside me was Chicken Smith. He had brought the bag, as usual, from the station, and he was waiting for his weekly paper.

Early as was the hour, the little man was drunk. It was almost the only time I ever saw him so. He squinted at the seal ring I wore; then he read aloud the motto under its crest.

"*Dixit et Fecit*," he spelled out.

"That's Latin," I explained patronizingly. "It means——"

"*Dixit et Fecit*," he continued mumbling, and heedless of my smug attempt to translate it for him. "*Dixit et Fecit*." He said and he did. Or, colloquially, 'A word and a blow.' That's the motto of"—naming a family of which ours is a straggling branch—"and the arms are——"

Here, squinting anew at the crest, he rattled off the heraldic description, using patly such cryptic terms as "gules," "vert," "dexter" and "cadet line."

While I was still gaping at the little old rustic who thus put to shame my own half-baked education, he caught sight of a calfskin book I was carrying. It was Anthon's edition of "The Iliad." Taking it from me without so much as by-your-leave, he opened it at random. In a singularly musical voice he scanned chantingly perhaps four lines of the hexameter Greek text. Then, with a glance at the flyleaf, he grinned in rueful fashion and said, more to himself than to me:

"Good old Pop Anthon! Many's the time he whacked me over the head!"

Now Charles Anthon, as all students knew, was professor of Greek at Columbia in the first half of the nineteenth century; and at the same time he conducted an ultra-exclusive preparatory school. He died in 1867. But what in the name of the Nine Muses, and of Blue Blazes as well, did this back country yap know about him; and how had he acquired such information?

I tried to babble forth some of my curiosity. But the first word seemed to pierce Chicken Smith's drink mists and to throw him on guard. For he favored me with a boozy leer and hic-coughed:

"Aw, whatcher gassin' 'bout, sonny? I was jes' foolin' you. I never knowed none of them book folks; nor the silly languages they writ in. Lemme be. I gotta headache."

I saw and talked with him fifty times after that. We hunted partridge together through the Ramapo Mountains. We lined up side by side at the ancient Norton House's smelly bar. We got to be good friends. But never again was I able to make him drop for an instant the rôle of rural lout, or to admit he had so

much as a grade school education. Above all, neither I nor any one else could lure him to speak of his early life. All he would say was:

"I was breed up country. Pop brang me here when I was a kid. Been hereabouts ever since."

A bunch of us got into a windily silly argument as to whether or not groundhog was good to eat. One yokel opined it was "pizen." Another said it was too tough and stringy and rank for human palates. Up spoke Chicken Smith from the far end of the bar:

"I've et it a million times. It's stavin' good, too. As good as pork, any day."

The claim was doubted. The argument waxed noisier. It ended by Chicken Smith's wagering ten dollars that he could eat groundhog and that moreover he could make it palatable enough for anyone to eat. The bet was taken. We filed into his kitchen two mornings later, by appointment. Chicken Smith ceased from puttering over the wood range and bore to the table a platter of brownish lumps of meat, which he declared were portions of groundhog.

He ate three of these. Another visitor and myself sampled gingerly the savory-smelling dish. Then my fellow experimenter snorted derisively:

"Groundhog nothin'! This here is sausage meat."

"Wa'al," returned Chicken Smith suavely, "what is sausage if it ain't ground hog? This is, anyhow. I know, 'cause I ground it myself. An' now I'll trouble you boys for that ten."

One night a few years later Chicken Smith came running to a neighbor's home in panic terror. He said he had just seen a burglar enter a house near his own, a house whose owner was away. An impromptu posse was massed. With Chicken Smith at their head, the neighbors forced a way into the house. Certainly a burglar had been there. Also, he had worked fast and deftly. Every portable article of any value at all was gone.

A week later Chicken Smith awoke one morning to find his own house stripped of its few worth while possessions. That was the beginning of the village's burglar epidemic.

House after house was entered and gutted. So skilfully did the thief work that he was not caught; nor, except once, did he leave without carrying off all his plunder.

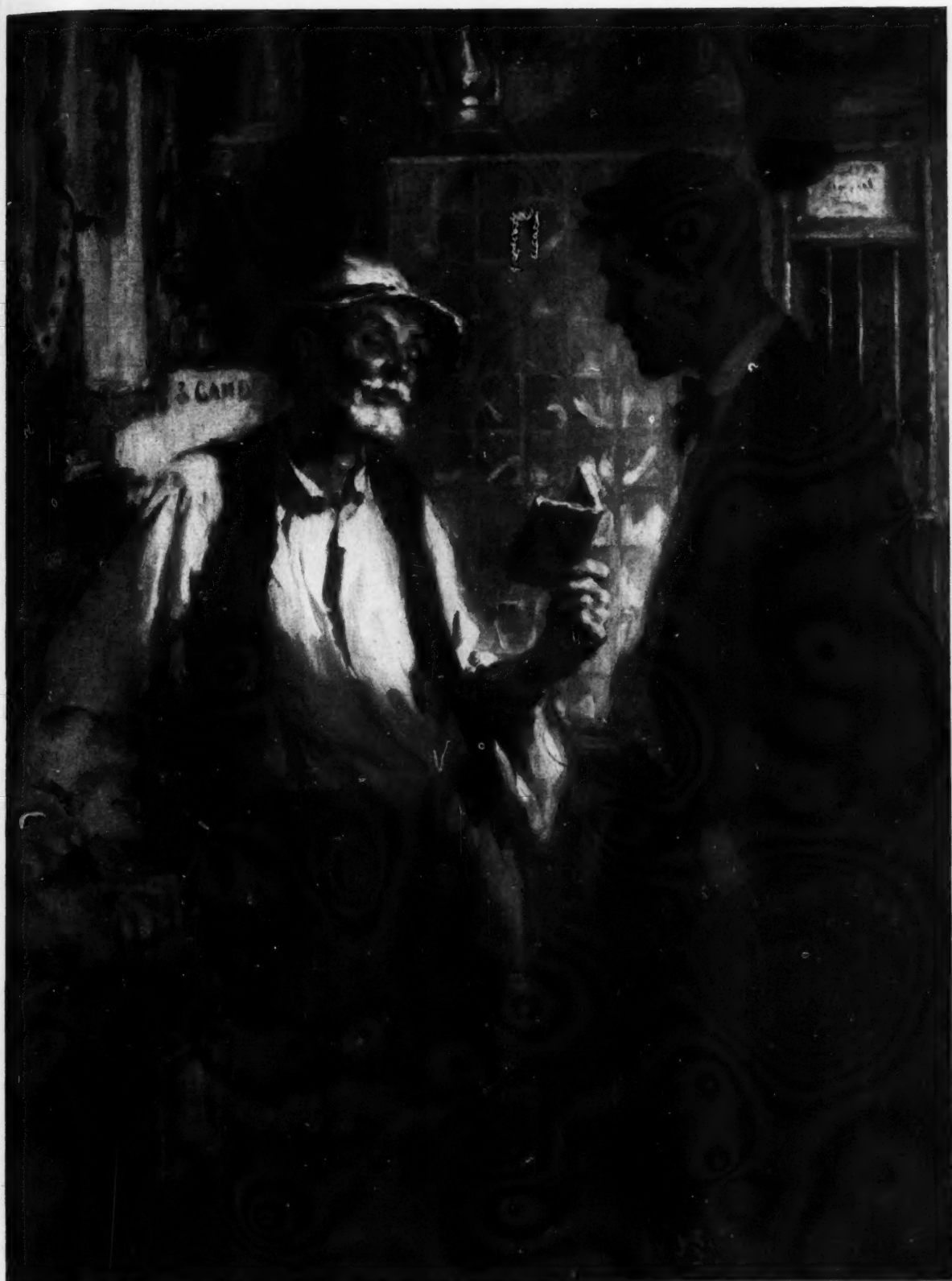
That one exception occurred when a late returning commuter opened his front door at midnight in bare time to see the dim figure of a man pass between him and the panes of a stair window. As silently as he had entered, the commuter let himself out of the house. Rousing several other people and deputing one of them to collect the posse, he prepared to catch the mysterious robber red-handed. The posse surrounded the house. Nobody liked to go in first. Then Chicken Smith strolled forward and volunteered to lead the way. He did it. In the presence of real danger he did not flinch. Fearlessly he entered the dark house and went from room to room and from floor to floor. Too late. The burglar had fled. Behind him he had left a neat pile of loot. Only a few small valuables had been pocketed.

That was the last of the series of countryside robberies. In a few months their memory was blurred. And blurred it remained until a new event cleared it.

It was nearly a year after this that Chicken Smith died. For thirty years he had been married to a daughter of the soil. Her name, as I remember, was something like Mehitabel—that, or another name as hopeless.

Well, he lay dying. And neighbors were "spelling" each other to sit up with the potential corpse. At the break of day, Chicken Smith woke wide from the coma in which, for hours, he had lain. He sat upright, his blue eyes dilated. Staring at the empty space at the foot of his truckle-bed, he cried out in exultant amazement:

"Claire! *C'est toi, enfin, mon ange?* Oh, sweetheart of mine, I've waited so long for you!"



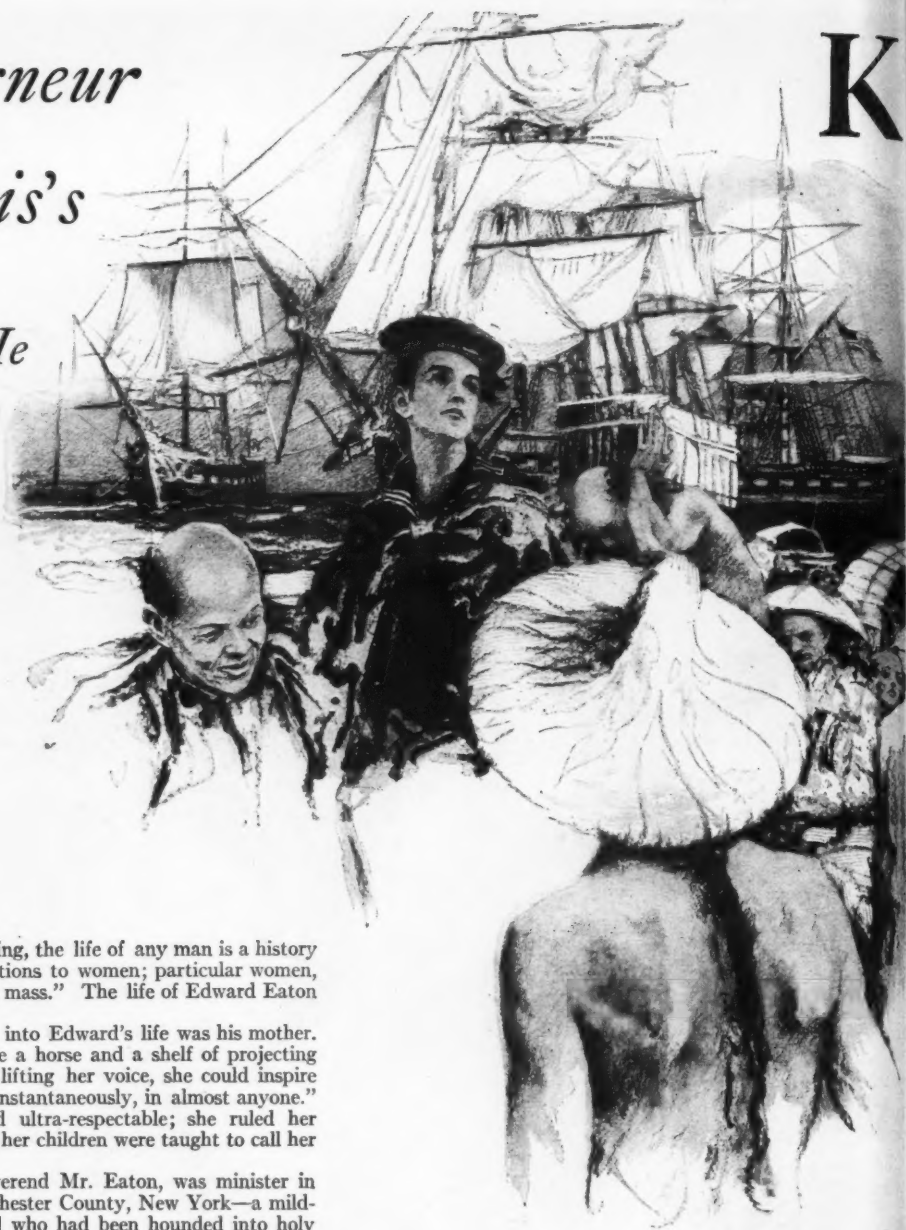
This little old rustic put to shame my own half-baked education in his musical chanting of the Greek text.

His widow—whose name, as I have said, was *not* Claire—sold the cottage and moved away. The new tenants made some repairs. The slab side of Chicken Smith's bedroom wall was torn out. In a crevice behind the slabs reposed a complete kit of burglars' tools. Also some jewelry, including a watch stolen from the house into which he had led the posse so courageously.

That is all. There never was any solution to Chicken Smith's mystery.

There must be at least a score of old-time Pomptonese alive today—Colfax, Bartholf, Roome and many another—who remember him. In a way, he was the most interesting—or most baffling—man I have met.

Gouverneur Morris's Novel *In Which He Tells why Men Hate The Women They Love*



The Story So Far:

"GENERALLY speaking, the life of any man is a history of that man's relations to women; particular women, and woman in the mass." The life of Edward Eaton is no exception.

The first woman to come into Edward's life was his mother. Mrs. Eaton had "a face like a horse and a shelf of projecting front teeth . . . Without lifting her voice, she could inspire unreasoning terror, almost instantaneously, in almost anyone." She was ultra-religious and ultra-respectable; she ruled her family like a despot; and all her children were taught to call her Dear Mother.

Edward's father, the Reverend Mr. Eaton, was minister in Bartow-on-the-Sound, Westchester County, New York—a mild-mannered and delightful soul who had been hounded into holy orders by his own mother, and hounded ever since by his wife. Edward had two sisters, Ruth and Sarah, and three brothers, John, Mark and James.

One day John, failing in a school examination, had been afraid to come home and face his mother. He ran away. Next morning the Reverend Mr. Eaton had found him at the navy recruiting station in Brooklyn. Now Mr. Eaton was an understanding man, and he forthwith aided and abetted John in joining the navy, with the proviso that his wife should never know. Then he went home, and was bitterly blamed by Mrs. Eaton as the cause of John's running away. She said he was too soft.

Edward's first hard lesson in the art of lying came when he was accused by his mother of breaking a "priceless Dresden china urn." Protestations of innocence did him no good; the little shaver was coldly banished to a cold attic room. After days of lonely misery, Edward finally acted on a strong hint of his father's. He lied to his Dear Mother and confessed to breaking the urn. At once he was forgiven and his path made easier forthwith.

Perhaps the second most important woman in Edward's young life was Alice Ruggles, the little girl he met at dancing class. Alice's father was reputed to be an atheist. At least he believed in evolution, which was just as bad in 1880. Edward would not have been allowed to see Alice at all if his Dear Mother knew just how much he liked her; so he kept it to himself. Alice was bright and sparkling and pretty and talented.

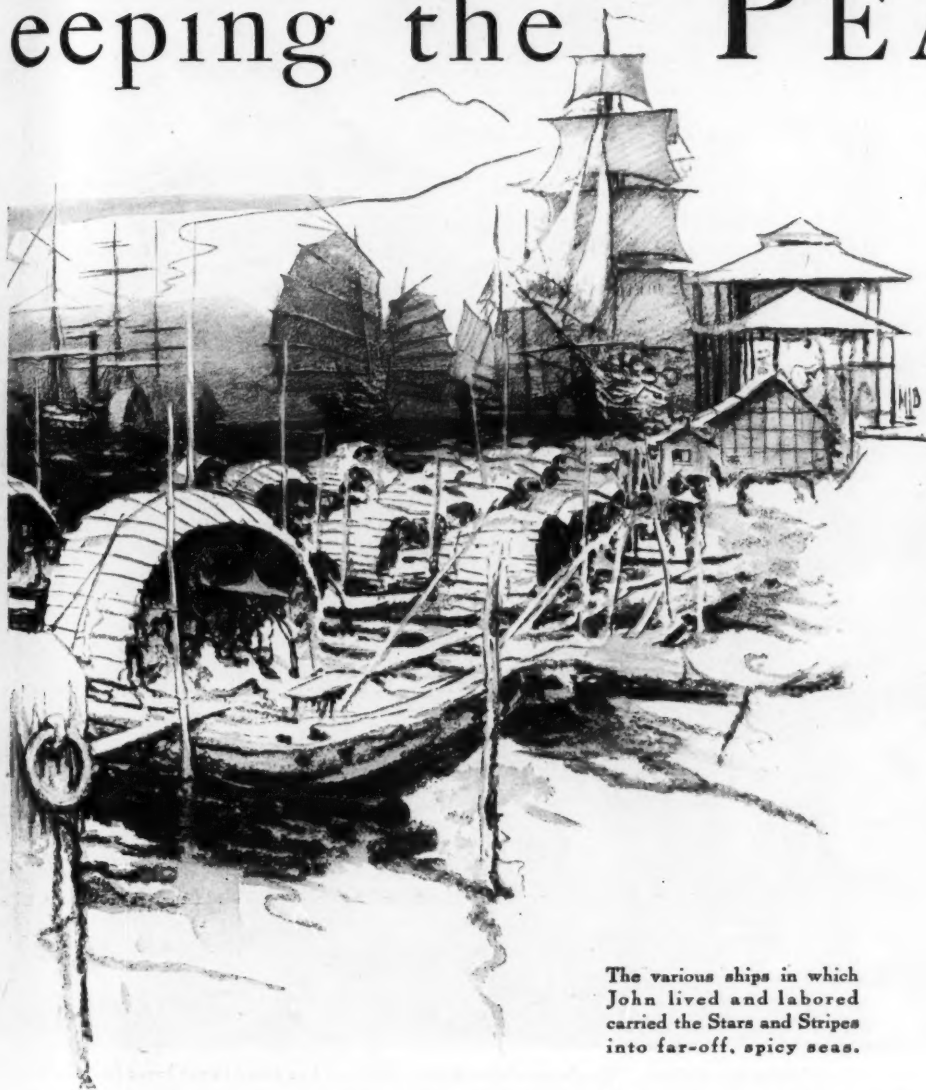
The favored ones in Edward's family were the girls. About this time a romance, skilfully abetted by Mrs. Eaton, developed between Ruth and Bruce Armitage, a young man of considerable wealth. When Ruth, on a coasting party with him, confessed that she had twisted her back very badly, and then bore up under it like a brave little woman, Bruce admired her so much that he fell head over heels in love. Subsequently, at Edward's birthday party, Ruth drew the ring in the birthday cake. It was an omen. Bruce kissed her very tenderly.

Alice Ruggles, to Edward's consternation, drew the thimble—omen of spinsterhood. But Alice's father afterwards filed that into a ring, too, which she showed with much pride. "He said it was probably the first time," as she remarked, laughing, "that anybody had ever been clever enough to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear."

IN ALL the years which had passed since the famous day when brother John had not come home from school, brother John had never come home at all. He wrote often, in a strangely mature, far-off way, but the various ships in which he lived and labored were far-off ships, which carried the Stars and Stripes into far-off spicy seas. When it became possible he left the navy and shipped on a merchantman.

Keeping the PEACE

Illustrations by
M. L. Bower



The various ships in which John lived and labored carried the Stars and Stripes into far-off, spicy seas.

The navy, he wrote, was not a career. To begin with, it wasn't a navy, just some old square-riggers left over from the Civil War. He had hoped to find a ship which was bound for New York, but he had fallen in with a skipper who was bound the other way and had offered to make a second mate of him . . .

It was fine that Ruth was going to be married—it didn't matter about there being so much money—if only Armitage was a straight, honest young fellow.

Please give his best regards to the young couple. He was sending Ruth a Philippine shawl.

"No, Dear Mother," he wrote, "I don't. You have asked the question a good many times and I've ducked out of answering. But I'll answer now. I don't go to church. We had services in the navy and of course I attended. But in the merchant marine it's different. Some men read their Bibles and some don't. I don't read mine, first because I haven't got one and second because I was brought up in such a way that I know the Good Book inside out and I remember that nearly every statement in it contradicts some other statement . . . Shore leave is short, and the best thing that a sailor boy can do is to make it sweet—music and singing, and color, and pretty girls to dance with—sweet and not wicked . . .

"No. I am not glad that Mark is going into the church. I used to know Mark pretty well and he didn't seem to be cut out for that kind of a career. Is it his own irrevocable decision, or has somebody been telling him what he 'ought' to do and what he 'wants' to do until, well, he's decided to fire ahead, no matter what the consequence to him, so as not to give pain

and disappointment to others?"

It was true that Mark, constantly worked upon since John's running away, and all his powers of individuality and self-determination and resistance worn down by Dear Mother's well known and unrelenting ways of bringing pressure to bear, had determined to be a minister of the Lord and to preach His gospel. He was to start work at a divinity school in the autumn and in the meanwhile his school days had come to a creditable ending in June, Ruth had been married and had sailed for Europe, and he had had the whole summer in which to consider his fate and to wriggle out of it if he could.

The girls' room, the second best room in the house, had been made over for him. Dear Mother had put a very large Bible on the table at the head of his bed, and over the bed itself had hung a cross of palm leaves. She had filled a whole bookcase with volumes of sermons and religious poetry. He had a writing table and a reading lamp, and there was an order that when Mr. Mark had shut himself into his room he was not to be disturbed.

Nevertheless, Mrs. Eaton kept an all-seeing eye upon the future clergyman's comings and goings and his deportment in general.

He was very acquiescent. Resistance, he felt, had got him nowhere and it never would. He was fond of violent exercise, of profuse sweatings and cold plunges, but his Dear Mother believed that violence except in the reproof of sinners and in the spreading of the Christian system had no place in the life of one dedicated to the service of God.

Mrs. Eaton, being a mid-Victorian, had read many books which described clerical life in England and as exercise for her boy she was inclined to believe in long solitary walks. Young Englishmen, preparing for the clergy, often "did the Continent" on foot, carrying "their things" upon their backs in knapsacks. For Mark's sake she actually found herself wishing that the Continent was just a little more accessible to Bartow-on-the-Sound.

For a little while Mark Eaton enjoyed the distinction of having the second best room in the house, and being set a little apart as one whose clay was going to be turned into something rather superior to the clay of which ordinary people are made; but the restraints and restrictions soon made havoc of his nervous system, and when he shut himself up in his fine room it was less often to improve his understanding of religion than to sulk and bemoan his fate.



Mark stopped short. "Don't come any farther, Eddie. I'm going to cut loose from here on

One night, immediately after dinner, when he had thus retired to sulk, he was presently aware of a knocking on his door, and of his father's voice asking permission to enter.

"Hope I'm not interrupting anything important, Mark," said the Reverend Mr. Eaton, "but I've been thinking that you haven't been quite yourself lately and—well, the truth is I haven't been quite myself lately . . . It's rather peaceful up here, isn't it?"

Mark was fond of his father and was without any particular awe of him. Father never nagged a fellow or preached at him.

"Your mother," said the Reverend Mr. Eaton, "said that if you were working I mustn't interrupt you."

"I'm not," said Mark hastily. "I don't come up here to work, anyway. Take this chair. It's the best I've got."

"Thanks," said Mr. Eaton, and he seated himself in a leisurely way, and at the same time he nodded in his son's direction a couple of times and smiled mischievously. "I've sometimes pretended that I was working behind closed doors, just so as to be let alone . . . I've nibbled through a good many novels that way . . . Do you know, there's one thing I hold in common with the Catholics, and that's confession—owning up. Now, I can't very well go to a priest, but I might very well go to a son of my own who was going to be a preacher and own up to something that for the present I'd rather that nobody else should know."

Mark felt at once flattered and puzzled.

"It's about your brother John," said the Reverend Mr. Eaton. "Do you remember the day he didn't come home and I posted off to find him?"

"And you found him just after he had enlisted in the navy and it was too late?"

Mr. Eaton shook his head. "No," he said, "and this is where my confession comes in. I found him just *before* he enlisted in the navy and *I didn't stop him*. I didn't try to stop him. I encouraged him."

There was quite a long silence. Finally Mark said: "I guess you know what I think about it?"

"I'd like to be sure."

"I think you were the best friend to John that he ever had."

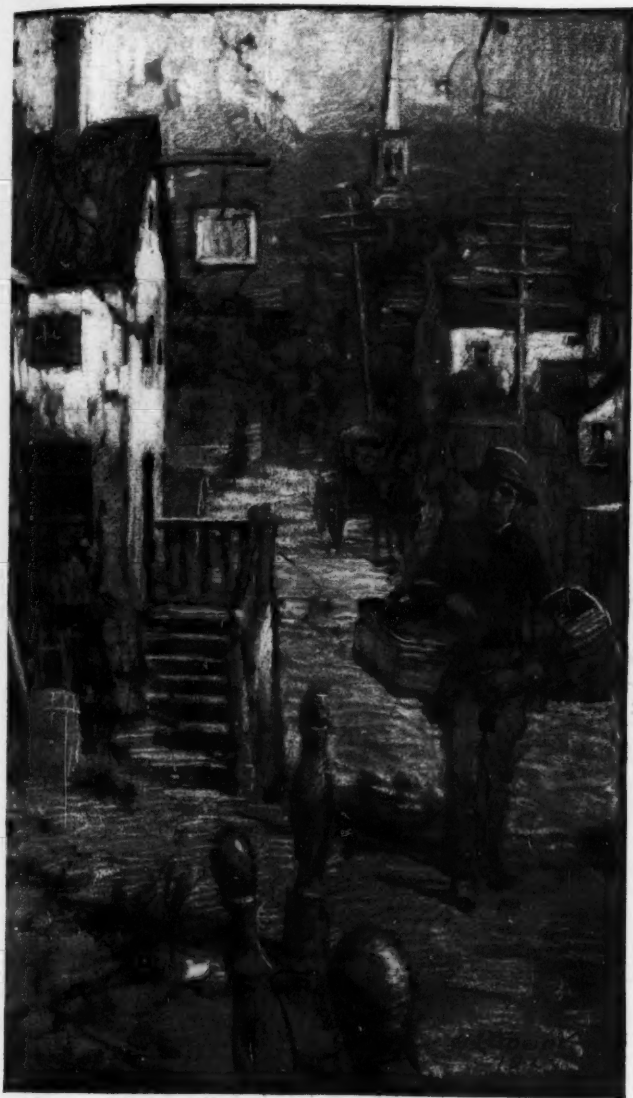
Mr. Eaton sighed and then laughed. "But your mother wouldn't think so, would she? And so I didn't tell her . . . Mark, I didn't dare tell her."

"I'm glad you told me."

"I'm going to tell you something else if you don't mind. Perhaps it's more serious, perhaps not . . . Mark, I don't like being a preacher. I never wanted to be one. I was hounded into it by my mother. I have never liked being one. I do my best to escape my own charges of hypocrisy, but if I only teach the things that I myself believe, the pickings are so small that without repetition and redundancy I can't for the life of me compose a thirty minute sermon . . . I came to tell you this, and to ask you if your own heart is really set on your being a preacher."

"Father," said Mark with feeling, "if you don't know that I'm being hounded into the thing just the way you were, then you're blind."

"I'm not," said his father. "I know. But I thought it polite to ask."



and walk like Hail Columbia."

"I'm no more fitted to be a preacher," said Mark, "than young Edward is fitted to train lions. And I no more want to be a saint than I want to be a devil."

"What do you want to be?"

"A farmer." A look of real surprise came into Mr. Eaton's face. Mark laughed. "I mentioned it to mother once, years ago. She didn't like the idea. She didn't think that it was 'quite nice' for a clergyman's son to go into farming. So I never said anything more about it—just for the sake of peace . . . If I had a choice I'd go West and farm. But mother is set on this church business, and you know how she is."

"For the sake of argument," said the Reverend Mr. Eaton, "I will admit that I do. And I know that when an irresistible force bumps up against a mere man . . . But don't let us discuss your mother . . . She doesn't interfere much with John."

The poison slowly settled into Mark's mind.

"No," he said, "not with John . . . He is too far off."

"Exactly," said Mr. Eaton. He rose and stretched himself. "Do you know, there is a very interesting history of Westchester County in the library. It's in two long volumes, and it's pompous. But it's worth a skimming. If I had the time and the opportunity I'd put a knapsack on my back and go for a six weeks' walking tour. I'd look the County over from one end to the other . . . There's a lot of beautiful farming country here and there . . . Now I don't want to suggest anything, but as a matter of fact your mother strongly approves of pedestrianism for the righteous . . ."

"Wait a minute, father. You know how mother is; if I refuse to go into the church I can't hang around here afterward.

Oh, I don't know why I should be afraid of my own mother! But you know how she is."

"There was a notion in the minds of the wise men who founded this nation," said the Reverend Mr. Eaton, "that every man has in the last analysis a duty to himself. They thought that every man is entitled to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

"But isn't a child's first duty to his parents, father?"

"Yes," said the Reverend Mr. Eaton, "of course it is, but only in the case of a child that deliberately asked to be born." Mark breathed deeply. "And in the case of my own children, I don't recall that any one of them had anything to say in the matter."

Edward recalls that on a certain night his father went upstairs to see his brother Mark, and that they came downstairs together, looking very cheerful, and that they went to one of the bookcases and pulled therefrom a couple of heavy volumes. He recalls that Dear Mother looked up from a tablecloth already heavy with violently colored pansies and morning glories and asked what book they were looking at, and that his father answered:

"It's the County history. There is an interesting account of the founding of St. Peter's Church in Westchester. Mark thinks that he would like to look it over."

Edward recalls that a day or two later Mark remarked across the breakfast table that if he only owned a saddle horse he would like to ride all over Westchester County, visiting the different points of interest, and writing down his impressions in a book. At the mention of the saddle horse, Dear Mother snorted and told Mark that he was a lazy fellow.

"The best way to travel," she said, "is on foot, unless the distances are prohibitive. In that way one sees much more than one would ever see from the back of a horse."

With the precedents of all those dear young English clergymen who tramped the Continent ever in mind, Mrs. Eaton was not long in determining that Mark should go for a tour of Westchester County whether he very much wanted to or not.

And one morning with a knapsack containing a change of clothes, and a small sum of money in his pocket, Mark actually set out. He seemed a little reluctant—rather as one who is going upon a long and perhaps a dangerous journey than as one who is merely off for a short and quiet lark.

It was noticed that he ate little breakfast. He seemed to have difficulty in swallowing. And when he actually set out it was suddenly. He jumped suddenly to his feet and said "Well, Dear Mother, I'm off," kissed her swiftly, and with an awkward wave of the hand for the rest of the assembled family, went hurriedly out of the house.

Edward went with him to the gate and a little beyond.

Here a strange thing happened. Mark stopped short and said: "Don't come any farther, Eddie. I'm going to cut loose from here on and walk like Hail Columbia."

Then suddenly Mark lifted Edward in his arms and gave him a great bear hug and kissed him on both cheeks. Then he turned and made off with very long swift strides and his head very high in the air.

Twice Mark sent brief words concerning his progress and his whereabouts. Then there came a long letter for Dear Mother which sent her into a cold and merciless rage with everyone, and Edward gathered that brother Mark was a scapegrace, unfilial son, who had broken Dear Mother's heart and gone West to be a farmer. He had, it seemed, written that under modern conditions it was impracticable to walk in the steps of Christ. And that a man ought not to preach what a man wasn't willing to do. He believed that the next best thing to helping people to be good was to help feed them. He had always, ever since he was a little boy, wanted to be a farmer, and to make a long story short he had answered an advertisement, and there was no time to consult anybody, it was a case of jumping at what looked like a golden opportunity or missing it, and he had jumped. Dear Mother would be disappointed and he was afraid she would be angry. He was sorry. He had to be what he was fitted to be, and not what somebody else thought he ought to be fitted to be.

The Reverend Mr. Eaton may or may not have been shocked by Mark's letter. But he bore up surprisingly well. It tickled his pride to know that he had sons who were willing to adventure greatly. He believed them to be good boys at heart and morally sound . . . But he wasn't sure of James.

Neither was Mrs. Eaton. She had never, for instance, looked at James and sighed and hoped that he would one day hear the call of the church. She made allowances for James which she never made for the other boys. If it looked as if some little domestic crime were about to be traced to James, further inquiries were usually suspended. That he might ever have been hounded into such an affair as that of the Dresden china urn was unthinkable.

If James had expressed the wish to become a sailor or a farmer he would have been listened to with toleration and even respect. But James had no particular wish to become anything or anyone in particular. At school he had a number of intimates but was not generally liked. He and his intimates thought a good deal about clothes and appearances. With regard to the ordinary schoolboy sports they affected a certain cynicism. Their conversation was largely given to grown-up topics. They took a precocious interest in sex. If their humor had been original it would have been Rabelaisian.

But Mrs. Eaton, who of course did not know the whole of James's shortcomings, made much of him, and so far as it was possible for a disciplinarian of her egotism, spoiled him. The secret was not hard to come at. James was in no way effeminate, but being a sensualist in the making, he was not without feminine qualities. He loved clothes and took note of them, and could describe them afterward. He loved textures and colors and music. He was more popular with the girls at dancing school than with the boys at Mr. Harrington's.

He had a very easy, knowing way of dancing. And he could whisper things to his partners that made them blush and giggle without offending them. In those old days the thought of kissing a girl was shameful to the average schoolboy, but to James it was a pleasant thought. A good deal of the time he imagined himself to be in love.

Thus, if there were to be another clergyman in the family it would have to be Edward. And toward that end Mrs. Eaton began to bring pressure to bear upon him. This pressure at first consisted in mournful and reproachful references to the cruel and undutiful conduct of John and Mark. Ought a mother, such a good mother as everybody said she was, and as indeed she acknowledged herself to be, to have all her pains and sacrifices go for nothing merely because her children did not know what was best for them?

In telling of her pains and sacrifices she became almost confidential. And this change in her attitude flattered the little boy and made him anxious to please.

For a time her strong mind gained an ascendancy over Edward. He began to imagine himself a clergyman. The authority exercised by his father over the choir, the gentlemen who passed the plate and the congregation in general, appealed to Edward. It would be pleasant, he thought, to give out a text and lay down the law, and to be for such long stretches of time the most conspicuous figure among many. And so it will be seen that the call of the church to Edward was by no means spiritual.

He wished to be a clergyman presiding over a church in the same way that he wished to be a drum-major leading a band, or a conductor managing a train.

Then one day he got hold of Paul Du Chaillu's first African book, and thereafter a real and desperate longing took root in his breast. There was still a lordship and a dominion in the longing. Hordes of naked savages would follow him about like so many puppy dogs, and they would love him as children love a kind and indulgent father. Of course, his authority over them would be absolute, but he would always have their welfare at heart and it would be at once their privilege and their passion to obey. They would follow him upon mighty explorations through forests where the sun never shone, they would be in with him at the death of strange and mighty beasts.

But how was a little boy to make a start at exploring and big game hunting when his Dear Mother had decided that it was best for him to enter the church and preach sermons and take up collections? And when she told visitors that she believed it more than likely that one day her "Darling Edward" would go into the church—"he is curiously spiritual for a child"—what could her Darling Edward say or do?

It was never wise to make an issue of anything with Dear Mother. If he told her point-blank—and especially before visitors—that he was now bent on being an explorer and going about armed to the teeth, and no longer cared a fig for vestments or rituals and the saving of people's souls, there would be an awful row. It was best to let her think what she liked to think and to keep the knowledge that her thoughts were running

on the wrong track entirely to himself. That way lay peace, and endless opportunities to peruse the African book, which he had had the cleverness to hide in a little attic over an outhouse.

But one day Dear Mother wanted to know why Edward was always disappearing into the said outhouse and remaining so long hidden therein.

She feared that he might be up to some mischief, and she let him see that it was her intention some fine day to pay him a sudden and unsuspected visit and see for herself.

And so she did.

She climbed the attic stair so quickly that Edward didn't hear her, and what she saw delighted her so that she withdrew her face and presence without saying a word.

The little hypocrite had made an altar of a soap box, and on the wall above it he had hung two sticks of wood nailed in the form of a cross, and, prayer book in hand, and murmuring the words very softly, he was conducting a church service.

Edward had no notion that he was committing a sacrilege. He only knew that in order to keep the peace with a mother like his mother, a little boy cannot afford to stop at anything.

An event was the return of the Armitages from their honeymoon in Europe. Bruce was his old natural self, but somehow he seemed to be a less important and gilded personage than formerly. Ruth was the important member of the union. Her body had gained weight and her voice had gained authority. The fact that she was a married woman seemed more important to her than the characteristics and character of the particular man she happened to have married. Almost any man of twenty-seven with ten thousand a year would have done as well.

Well, it seemed that the plans for the future with which the hopeful young people had returned from Europe were altogether different from the plans with which they had gone abroad. These old discarded plans had been of Bruce's conception. And the fact that up to the day of her marriage and for a few weeks thereafter Ruth had seemed to approve of them with enthusiasm did not mean that she had ever intended to help him carry them out.

It will be remembered that Bruce had married Ruth for the following reasons: First, because he loved her. Second, because he loved children and thought that she did. Third, because he loved to live in the country and thought that she did; and fourth, fifth and sixth, because he loved her. It will be remembered also that he had been born with a silver spoon in his mouth and that he had no sympathy with men who slave for money when already they have enough.

A few months of marriage and Europe had wrought mighty and revolutionary changes.

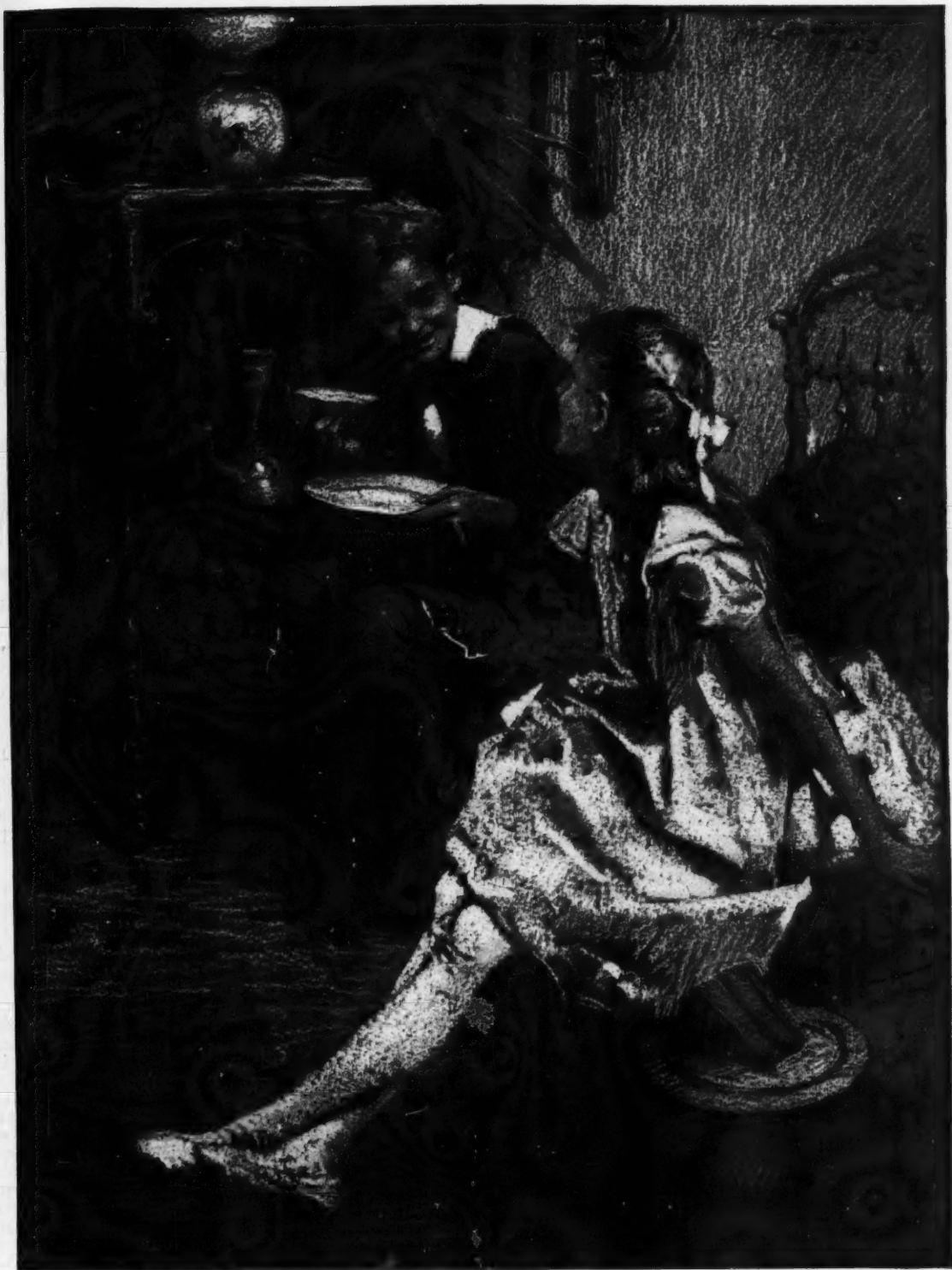
But to listen to Ruth you would have thought that she had had less than nothing to do with them.

The very night of their arrival she flung across the dinner table an astonished:

"Oh, but Mother Dear, we are *not* going to live in Westchester! Surely I wrote you that Bruce had changed his mind about *that*! We are going to have a little house on Fifteenth Street and Bruce is going to read law. He feels that he would be ashamed to vegetate in the country and live on his income. The city has its disadvantages, but I don't feel that a woman's innate dislike of dust, hard sidewalks and crowds should ever be allowed to interfere with her husband's career. Personally I think only that my husband is ambitious and not content to be an idler, and I rejoice at it . . . At least we shall be away from the mud in the spring break-up."

It was not at once easy to think of Bruce Armitage in any sympathetic relationship with city sidewalks and the study of the law. But Mrs. Eaton beamed, with her shelf of upper teeth in the middle of the beaming, and swelled like a pigeon. If there had been a battle between the young people, Ruth had won, as women, especially Mrs. Eaton's daughters, should and would. A young man, full of life and good nature, was being forced to live a life that he did not wish to live, and to learn and thereafter practise a profession for which he was unsuited and in which he never could take much interest. There was a triumph for you! And after such a short while of being married, too! What a splendid thing for Armitage's character!

At the news that the Armitages were to live in the city, the Reverend Mr. Eaton had smiled nervously, to hide a sudden and painful contraction in the region of his heart. Beginning with his own, he had seen so many decent men's lives spoiled by their women, and other lives, like those of his two runaway boys, which had been horribly threatened. It was too bad! "I never could quite understand," he said feebly, "why a man



"Then I'll run away with you, Eddie," said Alice. "We'll go to the South Seas."

who has sufficient money should want to live in the city and work for more."

"That is a fine doctrine to preach in the presence of unformed boys!" exclaimed Mrs. Eaton. "Work is as necessary for a man as brushing his teeth. A man who does not work can hardly be said to be clean. Idle hands get into mischief."

But Armitage did not look troubled or put upon. He seemed to be very happy and very much in love. His eyes constantly came to rest on Ruth's comely face. It was obvious that until his love for her cooled he would not know what was being done to him.

During dinner Ruth did most of the talking. She talked about picture galleries and palaces. They had seen Queen Victoria—"not a beauty, Dear Mother, but every inch a Queen." What a pity Albert had died! No really nice people in London ever mentioned the Prince of Wales. How terrible to think that such parents should have such a child! . . .

"Poor dear Bruce," she said. "Switzerland was such a disappointment to him. And he was a lamb about it. We had counted on doing the Mer de Glace and Mont Blanc—and crack went my wretched back so that the (Continued on page 126)

The Strange Case of JAMES HASWELL



"NO, JIM. This is final—ab-so-lutely." She flicked the ashes from her cigarette.

"This is one of the first times I've ever been refused," he said, "and it goes hard."

"Nonsense! You'll soon find another girl." Jim stared gloomily into the fire. "I don't want to hurt you, Jim," she said more gently, "but I could never marry you."

His head suddenly dropped into his hands, and she saw his shoulders heave. She was really touched. "I feel like killing myself," he said brokenly.

"Come, come, now, no dramatics. Men don't kill themselves for girls any more. It isn't being done. I'd be tickled to death if I thought one of these modern men could feel that deeply about me. But they don't. They might get drunk and drive madly out in the country to pull themselves together, but suicide for my lady-love went out with crinolines and pantalettes."

He looked up abruptly, rose and held out his hand. "Good-by, Lucia. You'll not see me again." She heard him groping at the door, and then the sound of his footsteps on the flagstones.

She was suddenly conscious of a vague alarm—something she fancied seeing in his eyes as he said good-by. "Nerves!" she thought and, turning out the lights, she went to bed.

Jim Haswell walked rapidly from her house. He thought of getting drunk and driving out into the country to forget her, but too much liquor always made him deathly ill instead of care-free, and besides it was a foggy night and the streets were greasy. The car would skid or he would catch cold. And so he walked on and on, the obsession of a mad purpose growing within him. "I'll show her!" he said and laughed bitterly.

Hours later he found himself at the little bachelor hotel where he lived. He locked the door of his room, threw off his damp hat and coat and stood for a while gazing blankly at the wall.

Then he flung himself down at the table and wrote furiously three letters, one to his mother, one bearing the words "Last Will" to his lawyer, and one to Lucia. "I want you to know that a man can still love deeply enough to die."

He propped the letters up on the bureau where they would be seen by the first person to enter the room "after it had happened." An unnatural light gleamed in his eye.

Then from the commode at the bedside he drew forth a little automatic pistol, handling it gingerly as though fearful that it might go off. "There'll be a beastly crowd rushing in here when they hear it, but it can't be helped."

An ingrained sense of economy prompted him to go to the door and unlock it. Why put them to the trouble and expense of breaking a perfectly good lock?

As he snapped back the lock, a husky voice called out: "Hello, Haswell, you still up?" And a

heavy hand pushed open the door. Billy Martin, redolent of alcohol, lurched into the room, grinning amiably.

But he caught sight of the pistol, the look in Haswell's eye, and the three letters propped in a row, and the smile froze on his face.

"My Lord! Haswell!" he gasped. "What are you doing?"

"You leave me alone, Billy. I know what I'm doing."

"Not—not suicide?" He spoke in an awed voice. Haswell was silent. "Money matters or a—skirt?"

Haswell shuddered at the coarse characterization of a divinity. "Beat it!" he muttered. "You couldn't understand."

Martin, considerably sobered by this shocking situation realized that he faced a crisis—one requiring tactful handling and particularly delay—lots of delay. To gain the latter he had recourse to the privileges of a drunken man. He wouldn't go home. On the contrary, he flopped heavily into a chair.

"Weary of this little old world, eh?" With maddening deliberation he found a cigarette and after many attempts succeeded in lighting it. "I know jus' how you feel, ol' top. Always some darn thing happening. If it isn't one thing, it's another. Isn't that a fac'?" Haswell was staring gloomily at him. "I'm asking you, isn't that a fac'? But what I really wanna know is, have you got your room rent paid up?"

"Never mind about that," muttered Haswell, impatiently fingering the pistol.

"But, shay—I mean, say—I've been drinking," he explained confidentially. "Now le's get to the bottom of this. You are



getting ready to kick off. All ri'; agreed; granted. Now what I wanna know—why pick such a messy finish? Gosh a'mighty, Haswell, haven't you any imagination?"

"What are you driving at?"

"Now, now!" Billy patted the other's coat sleeve—"I'm not goin' to interfere with your plans. All I say is, you're wasting a fine opportunity." He slapped his knee emphatically. "Yes, sir, fine opportunity!"

"What opportunity?" asked Haswell in spite of himself.

"Why, look here. Listen. You don't want to live any longer. Life is nothing to you. You want to die. Well"—he drew a long breath—"go out and do things that other people are afraid to try—like me, for instance. Now if I were goin' to

bump myself off, I'd go first and take a poke at the doorman of the St. Register. You can take all the risks in the world, because if you get killed, what's the difference? That's what you want. Make people sit up and take notice. Get some fun while you're about it. Go ahead and die if you want to, but die brilliantly, doing brilliant things."

Haswell was staring at the carpet. Martin reached out and took the pistol from his unresisting hand. He then tore up the three letters.

"Atta boy! Now turn in and get a good night's sleep."

When Billy Martin awakened at noon, he rapped at Haswell's door, then opened it.



Words and Pictures by JOHN T. McCUTCHEON

A maid was cleaning the room. "Mr. Haswell gave up his room this morning," she said. "He took all his things away an hour ago."

A few days later a short note from Haswell conveyed the meager information that he was well and in another town. For some months nothing more was heard from him.

Then one day the whole country was electrified by the unparalleled feat of an aviator who ascended to the upper air currents at 40,000 feet and catching the 300-mile east wind prevailing at that level, flew from San Francisco to New York in nine hours. He was nearly frozen to death, but he had discovered invaluable material regarding air currents. His name was given as James Haswell.

Newspaper pictures of the hero showed a gloomy visage.

Shortly after, the front pages of newspapers were plastered with headlines chronicling the sensational rescue of the crew of a sunken submarine by a diver who descended to hitherto un-reached depths and attached cables to the craft. The diver's name was James Haswell.

Before the excitement over this exploit had died down came the news that a man, unknown to pugilism, had knocked out a leading heavyweight by a single lucky blow for insulting a lady. Again the name of the man was James Haswell.

It was Haswell who calmed a crowded theater when a wreath of smoke curled out from the wings. He climbed to the stage, lighted a cigarette and sat down with the utmost nonchalance. The crowd left without panic or confusion. Haswell was the last person out, barely three seconds before the stage collapsed in flames.

Nearly every week the name of James Haswell leaped out of the blinding headlines. Some new feat of incredible heroism and daring added to his fame. He was becoming a fabled character. The imagination of the whole nation was stirred.

Rumor had it that he told a popular prima donna that her voice was rotten, passed a counterfeit dime on a Scotchman, and drank a quart of bootleg whisky without having it analyzed. He was always taking desperate chances. Women were mad about him. The brooding melancholy of his eyes fascinated them. "He has lived!" they said, and were thrilled to the core.

In a year Haswell was a super-hero. He was "the man of mystery," "the man with a charmed life," "the man who flirted with death," "the incarnation of courage," "the man with whom death was forever failing to keep its rendezvous." Gamblers made "books" on the length of his life—ten to one he would not last out the year.

People who talked with Haswell noted the tense concentration of his gaze, as though he looked through them at some fixed object far beyond. He was queer—evidently a genius. Beautiful women who centered their seductions on him gave up in wounded vanity. Press agents of popular screen idols reported them engaged to him. He spent each morning from ten to twelve denying rumors, and from twelve to one signing autographs. Metropolitan journals put him in the news summary along with Foreign Domestic, Politics, Stocks and Society.



Among others, Lucia breathlessly followed his amazing exploits. "I must have made a mistake," she said. Thereafter her one motive in life was to see him again and give him a rehearing. For hours a day she sat and concentrated on this desire, hoping that its telepathic force would reach him.

One day—it was a Tuesday about ten A. M.—she was seated in the park concentrating. The distant drone of machinery crept into her consciousness. At first she thought it was an oil-burner some place in the neighborhood. But in the course of time a shadow fell upon the path, and a parachute descended at her side. A man clad in a leather jacket encrusted with ice stood before her. It was James Haswell. He had leaped from a plane forty thousand feet above to test a new style parachute, and by one of those inscrutable chances which make truth stranger than fiction, he landed by the one whom he had never expected to see again in this world.

They stared at each other, unbelieving.

"You!" she cried, and held out her arms.

"Wait," said he as he removed his oil-stained jacket. He then clasped her to his heart.

They were married and spent the honeymoon quietly in a little farming community where the only danger was bees. It was idyllic.

They walked in quiet lanes, they rode upon gentle horses, they swam in the shallow waters of the peaceful river. Then into his heart crept a fear, tiny at first but growing until it seemed to stifle him. He saw the dark circles under her eyes, the lines that ruffled her forehead.

She was unhappy! She was disappointed that he was content to live this tranquil Arcadian life when they might be out riding the winds of High Adventure. There were long silences that made his heart ache.

"She wants me to go," he thought. At night he watched her tossing in restless slumber, and his eyes also became shadowed with dark circles. The days became dragging torments.

Finally he could stand it no longer. Something must be done about it. One night as they sat on the porch screened from the evening dews by the thick morning-glory vines, he turned to her abruptly and said: "I've been thinking it over and I've decided that we've been down in this quiet place too long, and that we'd better go back and have some excitement."

She burst into tears. "Oh, I've been afraid it would come!"

"Afraid what would come?" He held his breath.

"Afraid you would want to get back into those dangerous things again!"

"D-d-don't you want me to?" he gasped.

"Oh, no, no, no! I've been miserably lying awake nights worrying about you already."

A mighty load lifted from his heart. His soul sang with relief. Life was sweet, and Safety First had become his dominating motive. He crushed her to him. "Great guns!" he shouted. "And here I've been losing sleep for fear you might want me to go!"



L begins many words—*LOVE*,



The Luck

By Kathleen

Illustrations by

"**T**IME," Ellen Murphy said with resolute optimism, "for something pleasant to happen!"

Nobody answered, although there were four other persons in the shabby, scarred, grease-stained, water-stained, smoke-stained Murphy kitchen. Mrs. Murphy sighed audibly, it is true, but then Mrs. Murphy had been sighing thus for many days. Ellen's mother was shredding string beans listlessly; she looked at the dull, opaque space that was the wintry window, looked at the brightly nicked clock that was ticking above the sink, and resumed her work. She had worn mourning almost ever since her children could remember anything at all; but the mourning she wore today was fresh.

Ellen's radiant youth was also enhanced rather than eclipsed by new black, and Ellen's little sister-in-law, Mart's young widow, looked less than her eighteen years in raw, coarse serge and thick crape. Monica sat limp and apathetic in what had been Grandpa's chair; her thick young peasant hands were locked, her dark face, upon which the black curling hair encroached like vegetation across temples, brow and upper lip, was tear-stained.

Martin had been dead for three months, Grandpa for four, and Monica's baby was expected in a few months' time.

The Murphy women, mother, sister and wife, grieved each in her separate way. Ellen grieved healthily, resentfully, with all her youth and vitality and quick temper turned into the new groove. But the other two, separated by a half-century of years, nevertheless mourned alike, in the old-country fashion. Mart's mother and his wife were crushed. "No sorrow," said their silences, their sighs, their utter collapse under bereavement, "is like unto my sorrow!"

The thunderbolt of Mart's death had followed two lesser shocks. Monica's splendid mother had died in the summer, in far-away Ireland, and the whole family had exerted itself to comfort and help the distracted girl. And in the autumn old Tom Florence, Ellen's grandfather, had not so much died as quietly slept, with an expectant half-smile twitching his fine old puckered mouth, and his blackthorn stick in his hand.

These were desolating changes. Mart had devoted himself to his silent, dark-faced, passionately loving wife, and Ellen to her mother. "Gramp's room," a dark lair off the Murphy kitchen, had been cleaned and aired and was transformed into a pleasant, sunshiny place destined for the expected baby. For the baby's sake Monica had made a heroic effort to be brave, and for Monica's sake the other women never showed their grief.

And then had come an October day just like many another, with a cold, windy rain in which Mart had come home a little chilled.

When the women thought about it all, their narrative, their tears, their wails began there, and it was as if health and sunshine and happiness had never been. Ellen, indeed, retained only an imperfect recollection of the brief weeks between the cable from Ireland about Monica's mother, Grandpa's quiet departure from the old chair in the kitchen and the old chair in the yard, and the terrible hour that took Mart away. It was all a black blur of change and sorrow.

For Mart had been their mainstay, their prop, their pride and delight. Mart was thirty-six, wizened, shrewd, good-hearted, humorous, loyal. He had three sisters: Lizzie-Kate, who was Mrs. Joe Kane, and Jule, who was Mrs. Willy Flint, and Ellen, who was unmarried and not yet twenty-two.

"It's time," Ellen said with a great sigh, and in a tone between a laugh and a wail, "for something pleasant to happen!"

and LIFE and LOYALTY—and of Clem Riordan NORRIS

James Montgomery Flagg

And besides these Mart had an immense family circle, and a political affiliation; he could make friends anywhere, he had influence everywhere. Whether it was a grand ball of the knights, or a baseball game, or a mammoth rally for the new Congressman-elect, he could wriggle his party in somehow, get them seats on the actual platform perhaps; he was always being enthusiastically greeted, always greeting in turn various "Matts" and "Charlies" and "Cons."

Now and then, when he was well launched, he would enrapture his mother and his sisters' husbands with accounts of political deals, and they would "Oh" and "Ah" in deep amazement and appreciation, dazed and awed at the intricacies of the game.

Mart's attitude toward the world was one half swaggering, half truculent, but he was all goodness, generosity, sweetness, understanding where his women-kind were concerned, and they idolized him and believed him to be the smartest person in the world. But all this was over now—all the pride and excitement and delight. Mart had had a heavy cold, had wheezed and labored with his breath; his little lean face had grown florid, and suddenly—

Suddenly danger had leaped into the little cottage, everything was confusion and sorrow. Mart Murphy was sick—he was very sick—the doctor was there—the priest was there.

Mart Murphy was dead, and awestruck, praying neighbors on Goat Hill had only to cease their own wailing to hear the wild screams of the girl who had been his wife, and who was widowed in her eighteenth year, and to be a mother before Easter.

"Ellen stepped into the kitchen, and she come over to his mother, and you'd not see the eyes in her head for the weeping she done!" the widow Cahill said a thousand times, describing the scene. "Her sister Jule was there, but Lizzie-Kate had gone home, for he was sleeping good, do you see? And sure hadn't he had the little cuppeen of brot' that it might lay good on him, and bring the stren'th back into him? But, faith, his hands was very cold," the widow usually interrupted herself at this point to say sadly. "This was the Thursday," she would resume thoughtfully. "It was only the Tuesday that he come home sick, mind you!"

Nobody contradicted her; she was Mrs. Murphy's oldest friend, and the Murphys were doing no talking at all. Monica's wildcat silences, watchful, fearful, like some creature at bay, reminded them all of her strange honeymoon days only a few months ago. She sat huddled in the chair that had been the old man's, black-faced, red-eyed, unmoving.

Mrs. Murphy was crushed; her man had been taken from her many years ago; now her father and son were gone, too. Sorrow she could bear, and had borne. But this did not seem so much a definite sorrow as a change, change in every aspect of the world that had been so



"It's bad luck having no man in the family, and they'll have me on the streets, I shouldn't wonder," muttered Mrs. Murphy darkly.

The Luck of Clem Riordan

kindly and so easy, change into hardness, darkness, loneliness, strangeness. She had thought life one thing; it was now another; everything was a bewilderment and a blank.

Ellen did her best; she talked in a dead silence, she made tea, made toast, urged the others cheerily to share them. But hour after hour and day after day the dreary routine of the house was the same. She got breakfast for three, but she was the only one who did more than crumble it; she went off to the office after affectionate kisses and admonitions, and she sometimes cried on her desk when she got there.

But she was always home, brave and composed, before five, begging her mother just to step out into the dooryard for a breath of air, clattering pots and pans, and more than ever affectionately appreciative of the call that Mrs. Callahan or the widow Cahill or kindly Kate Oliver might be making. Ellen came to dread the days when no sympathetic neighborly woman chanced to be there. To be sure, the callers had but one subject, but just the mere sound of their voices did her mother and poor little Monica good, and helped Ellen enormously.

Tea would be poured, plates passed, butter cut. But there the pretense usually stopped. The hot drink was welcome, but the food choked them all, and presently they were all in desolate tears.

Ellen would presently be washing dishes, with her eyes still brimming and her heart hot with resentment and discouragement and pity and pain. Twenty minutes past seven, and all the long evening ahead, and the world changed!

No Grandpa to kiss and tease and spoil; no Mart, laconic and proud and amusing; no laughter while she pressed a silk dress for tomorrow or trimmed a hat. No Clem—

For there had been a serious quarrel between Ellen and Clem last summer, a few weeks before Grandpa's death; and although the Riordans had duly called in the various hours of sorrow and Ellen not infrequently saw Clem, the bloom, the radiance and newness and the sweetness seemed to have gone from their relationship. A year or two ago it had been the saucy, independent Ellen, who was not quite sure that she wanted to settle down with no husband more thrilling than Clem Riordan, whom she had known half her life.

Now it was all oddly altered. Ellen was worried, sad, burdened with sorrow and responsibility, and as the scale went down with the Murphys it seemed to be rising with the Riordans. Clem's sister Alice married a prosperous Chicago plumber, and there seemed to be no limit to his own good fortune.

"Him and Wishy Donovan bought options on every last one of them vacant lots out by 'the cracker factory,'" Joe Kane, Ellen's brother-in-law, commented with mild admiration and envy; "and didn't the 'Bernstein Small Homes for Small Incomes' come along and buy out the whole place! And not twenty-four hours later wasn't Clem made assistant manager to Reilly, and Reilly with Bright's the way he won't last out the winter, God help the poor feller? Jim Walsh says to Clem that he'd practically be as good as half-owner when Reilly was gone, and Clem come back at him, 'Then it'll be Wilson and Riordan,' he says, 'or I'll take me money out of the bank where it's putt, and start a building and contrahctin' business of me own.'"

"You'd wonder where he'd have money to put into anny bank, that was a barefoot gossoon of twelve or thereabouts, and he comin' over on the ship with his papa," Mrs. Callahan, spending

an evening in the Murphy kitchen, as were the young Kanes, said in a sort of half dreary, half dreamy tone.

"It's very droll the way some has it and some hasn't," Lizzie-Kate, adjusting the drowsy head of young Joe against her flat breast, contributed softly. "There's some is always poor and some would be getting rich on you so fast it would amaze you!"

"Wasn't it them Riordans that slep' in your own good kitchen for the first three nights they'd be here in America, Mrs. Murphy, ma'am?" Mrs. Callahan asked roundly, with an air of appealing to her abstracted hostess quite spontaneously.

Mrs. Murphy roused herself from a dark dream, looked about the dingy kitchen and the kindly, neighborly faces with blinking eyes, pursed her little mouth like a walnut shell and sniffed with a violence that affected either cheek in turn.

"What was it? What was it?" she muttered, still lost in her own sad musing.

"Didn't the Riordans come to you, the way they did be knowing your cousins in the old country?" Mrs. Callahan repeated encouragingly.

"Oh, sure they're very rich and prosperous entirely!" Mrs. Murphy said hurriedly, still confused.

"There's Clement—that Ellen wouldn't take awhile back, that she might have a man to stand back of her," she added bitterly, "and her father and brother and grandfather all tuk off on me that'll end my days in the poorhouse."

The dreary voice died out into dreary stillness. Ellen began quietly to cry; Monica sat silent, black-faced, staring. The child that was Mart's son leaped under her heart, and she put her coarse rich black curls against the worn covering of Grandpa's chair and shut her eyes and wished that she and the baby could creep under the quiet stone that marked where Martin was lying.

"Clem Riordan's mother is all set up very grand," Joe Kane said sturdily, after an agonized glance at his wife, returned by Lizzie-Kate with one of infinite steadiness. Sainly, heroic Lizzie-Kate could bear her own grief for a beloved brother and have courage to spare with which to carry some of the others' burdens as well. "He's bought her t'ree little houses up Miller Street; and wasn't she tellin' me, mama, that whin she'd be livin' in the wan she'd be rintin' the others like a queen!" continued Joe.

"Oh, Clem'll be President of the United States, I don't doubt!" Ellen said, from a sore heart.

"And you—that wouldn't take him!—you've done very well by yourself, Ellen!" her mother reminded her witheringly.

"You'd think you wanted to get rid of me!" Ellen answered, with sorry spirit. "Now, when Monica's like she is, and they may be taking the place off you any instant, and Lord knows what we'd all do then—you'd have me riding around in Clem Riordan's new car, as if what happened to my own people was no business whatever of mine!"

And they all began to cry again.



Clem's Mother, whose maternal jealousy makes her pretend all the girls are trying to capture her son!

"If me son had been spared to me, sure there's no Board of Public Works cud get me little home off me!" Mrs. Murphy muttered darkly. "But it's bad luck havin' no man in the family, and they'll have me on the streets as easy as kiss your hand, I shouldn't wonder!"

"Joe did all he could, mama; he talked to the whole of them at the City Hall!" Lizzie-Kate said loyally. "And you'll never be on the streets, dear; for look at the money you'll get for the lot—nine thousand, six hundred and seventeen dollars



"I'll—I'll take you to dinner somewhere," Clem began and stopped, choked with sheer felicity.

and eight cents, paid right into your hand! And wouldn't you be coming to us, and treated like a queen itself, until we could find you a nice little house for yourself?"

"If it wasn't for me mama's dyin', and me brother laid away wit' tossin' waves ahl over him," Monica contributed, in her low, hoarse, soft voice, "sure I could go back to Ireland, where there'd ahlways be a taste of male and a little corner be the fire itself for me and mine—"

"Oh, Monica, you make me so tired! Haven't you got all that insurance?" Ellen demanded, half indignant, half loving. "And mama talking of starvation when she's always had enough to live on, and Grandpa left her a lot she didn't expect!"

"But look what's in it, haven't they every shillin' of it at the bahnk?" her sister-in-law criered pathetically. "And how would I know but wan of thim la-ads would be off to Africa, and me lath ha'p'ny in his pants? And Mart—that treated me so good—"

It was then that with a great sigh, and in a tone between a laugh and a wail, Ellen Murphy said: "It's time for something pleasant to happen!"

Pleasant things duly happened, but not to the Murphys. The local authorities, with that offensive surety possible only to government officials, began to plaster Goat Hill with placards,

and a chorus of protests went up from the Irish and Italian families so long happily established upon the rocky rises and the grassy cliffs and now driven to straight streets and the houses that stood in rows.

Ellen and Lizzie-Kate went house-hunting—a discouraging business at best, so close to the biggest city, and made worse by Monica's dreary apathy and Mrs. Murphy's peppery comment.

"They'll shut me up in no box like a match!" said the latter coldly, when a flat in a block-long row of three-story brick dwellings was under discussion. "Eight thousand, five hundred!" she ejaculated, of another residential possibility. "Is it the dozen or the hundred of thim fire-traps they want it for?"

"It's small, of course," Ellen conceded, of a third place.

"Oh, no; 'tis fully as large as me grave will be!" her mother returned quietly, in a tone of indescribable melancholy.

Presently the Murphy shanty that had sheltered them all through so many riotous and carefree years, that had been a landmark among the slatternly sheds and crooked fences of Goat Hill, was torn down, and the three Murphys were all crowded into Lizzie-Kate's small house—Lizzie-Kate, whose most strenuous and loving efforts could not make them comfortable. Life to young Ellen Murphy had become a serious, a frightening affair; she seemed to have nothing in common with the lucky, dancing, mischievous, reckless Ellen of a year ago, who had always felt that misfortune was a good deal a matter of the law of attraction anyway.

"What would you expect for a sour old she-fox like Dick Foy's mother?" Ellen would demand unsympathetically. "Of course she'll always have bad luck—she brings it on herself!" And, "Don't worry about mama, Lizzie-Kate," the old Ellen would console her sister. "There's nothing she and old Biddy Cahill like so much as what they call a good hard 'trile!'"

But Ellen did not take this tone now. Grief and responsibility had taught her new lessons, and for the first time in her giddy twenty-one years she began to share the fears that so often filled the air about her—fears of sickness and stubborn poverty and bills and unemployment; and all the world seemed full of them, and every family and every type of happiness cruelly menaced by them. She began to be afraid of losing her own precious job and even worried when a chance newspaper article mentioned the national debt.

An undue proportion of the pleasant things for which she so wearily wished continued to befall the Riordans. Reilly presently succumbed, and to the almost scandalized awe and admiration of his entire circle, Clement A. Riordan's name went up on a new sign with that of old Mr. Willy Wilson, who had inherited the contracting business from his father only twenty years earlier. "Wilson and Riordan, Houses, Cottages, Bungalows—We Keep Your Size in Stock!" Ellen seemed to see their big fence advertisements wherever she went.

Under all her young grief and resentment, she missed Clem sadly. Love Ellen had perhaps scorned, but the companionship had been sweet, attended as it had been by loyalty and admir-



Ellen found, as she had known she would find, Clem.

ation and all his crude, big, gentle belief that everything she did and said and thought was perfection. Other swains might be unreliable, in the lives of other girls. But Ellen Murphy had felt herself sure of Clem Riordan, whenever, wherever, howsoever she wanted him; the phrase "Ellen and Clem—that's two" had been current wherever merry-making was discussed.

But that was all over. It was hard for Clem even to see Ellen alone as the first hard, early winter after Mart's death shut down. She and her mother and Monica had one crowded bedroom between them, the room that had been the parlor at Lizzie-Kate's; the dining room was the only sitting-room, and there was small comfort for either visitor or hostess. It was different with Lizzie-Kate and Kate Oliver and Annie Curley and all the older women. They foregathered in the kitchen, where babies could be nursed and tea poured and dishes washed almost uninterruptedly. But years and wisdom had not brought Ellen to the point when there seemed to be any beauty in this.

It was the more maddening to have Clem still cordial and friendly. Ellen did not want cordiality and friendliness from a superior young man in an incredibly smart looking new heather-mixture overcoat, a young man who drove a shining car; she



JAMES MONTGOMERY FLAGG.

had had more than cordiality and friendliness from the shabby old struggling Clem of a year ago. She had had blind adoration, hard breathing, stammering and gasping words, looks humble and fatuous in their anxious devotion.

To be sure, his sleeves had been too short then, and his big hands rough and ungroomed. She had taken his admiration very casually, as perhaps something less than her due. She told herself hotly now that she had never loved him, and she had almost come to hate him! Everything that he did and had gnawed into her resentful consciousness with that acute vitality only possible to jealousy. It seemed to Ellen that everybody told her something new about Clem Riordan and his success; there was no end to it.

It was just before Thanksgiving that she heard that Mr. Will Wilson's daughter Jean was crazy about Clem Riordan, her father's young partner.

But I have a little hired girl that works for me now—when she isn't stravin' the streets like a wild Rooshian, chewing gum on me and leavin' the things streelin' out of her clothes-chest the way she might have no wit at all—and she'll help me cook it. I don't know are they more trouble than they're worth, to have help in the kitchen," she concluded complacently. "Did anny one of you ever have the taste of one of thim pokin' about your pantry, and wasting the food on yot?"

"Sure, I'd never give house-room to one of them!" Mrs. Callahan said stoutly. But she was mortally offended, as were all the other women. Ellen was young and rude enough to give an elaborately patient and quite audible sigh as she shrugged her shoulders, half closed her insolent young eyes and stared uninterestedly into space.

"Now I tell Clem it's a wife he needs," the insufferable Mrs. Riordan continued, unseeing. "He'll give a great laugh. 'Faith,'

Oh, well, Ellen thought wearily, she had expected that!

She needed a new office dress; mourning was expensive, Ellen discovered, in more ways than one. For months now she had been sponging and pressing her one "good gown"; it was almost gone now, and the black suède gloves bought for the funeral were bluish white at the tips.

Wearied by her office day, Ellen came home, in a certain late December twilight, to find Clem's mother and Lizzie-Kate and her own mother and Mrs. Callahan in the kitchen, where was also the dark-faced, silent, staring Monica. Mrs. Riordan, a fine, smooth-skinned, handsome woman in the fifties, was boasting. Lizzie-Kate looked troubled; the other women were all a little red of face.

"Wear it anny old place, ma!" he says," said Mrs. Riordan, with a downward glance at her silk gown. "You'll need new clothes for your trip, anyway!" he says to me."

"There was a story once me Aunt Annie—God rest her!—would be tellin' all of us," Mrs. Murphy began, with apparent irrelevance. "Twas of a little goose itself that would strut round the barnyard. 'Oh,' he says, 'didn't I hear the farmer's wife herself say she was going to carry me off and dress me! Sure, you won't know me whin I come back,' he said. But, mind you, didn't she have in mind that she'd be choppin' the head off him first—"

"How long since you were in Ireland, Mrs. Riordan?" peace-loving Lizzie-Kate interposed hastily.

"Twas before the boy himself was born, and Clem's pushin' thirty-one," his mother, reaching her favorite topic readily through any channel, answered gladly. "I told um I'd cook his New Year's goose and then I'd be off!" she resumed. "Not but what he could buy himself pheasants and oranges and I don't know what at Delmonicker's, did he but want thim!"

he said to me yesterda', whin I was puttin' on me bonnet for mass; 'Faith,' he says to me, 'if I could do without a wife whin I didn't have a cent, why would I have one now? I'm tied to nobody, and no one can show a letter or a note itself on me.'"

"You're lying, lying, lying. He never said any such thing!" Ellen Murphy said somewhere deep down inside her, where a sword was going straight into her heart.

"Doesn't Jane, or Jenny, or whatever she calls herself that's Mr. Willy Wilson's own daughter, always be foaming the boy?" his mother demanded proudly. "Is it promised to somebody else you think you are, that you wouldn't take up with a fine rich ger'l like that?" I've asked and questioned him manny's the time. 'No, mama,' he'll tell me; 'No,' he'll say, 'there's ger'ls manny a boy would dance wit', he'll say, 'or maybe ride about in the car on a day's outin' wit'—but what's that?' he'll say."

"You're lying——" Ellen told herself again. And when Clem's mother was gone the red still burned in her face, and the other women did not look at her.

"Well, the back of me hand and the sole of me fut to you, Alicia Dugan, that didn't know which end of a shoe was the front whin you came to America itself, and you grown and married!" Mrs. Callahan said bitterly, as the door closed upon the visitor.

"There's one I'd always be glad to show the door to!" Mrs. Murphy added simply.

"'Tis terrible, the way she boasts!" Lizzie-Kate said, mildly regretful. "I don't believe Clem is like that," she added charitably.

"Indeed he is, then!" Ellen said bitterly, and almost involuntarily. "She's scared to death for fear he's tied up to me," the girl went on, scornfully carried quite out of all decent and natural reserve by sheer pain at the cruelty of life. "But she needn't worry! I wouldn't take him planked on a platter—if he was the only man in the parish! I wouldn't marry him under chloroform, that's so smart with his car and his new coat, flaunting himself before people that are having their trouble, and with their hearts in the grave——"

And Ellen, choked with angry tears, and angry afresh at herself for permitting them to rise, rushed from the kitchen and slammed the door. They heard her run upstairs.

"The poor child! Does she like him, Lizzie-Kate?" Mrs. Callahan asked in a low tone.

Lizzie-Kate, tears in her own eyes, nodded seriously. "I'm afraid she does," she conceded gravely. "And, if you ask me, Clem Riordan's just as crazy about our Ellen as ever! Oh, dear; if only they had settled it all before—everything happened, and Clem began to do so well! It would help poor Ellen so to have him back of her! But, mark my words, she'll never take him now."

"I'd like to have him come try his luck with her now!" Mrs. Murphy commented, with bitter relish. "She'd learn him where he got off at!"

This was spoken in deep sarcasm, yet it was no later than that very evening that Clement Riordan fulfilled her wish.

He twisted the little catch of the bell that was screwed to the middle of Lizzie-Kate's front door, and it was Ellen's withered little mother who let him in. The front hall was not lighted, and Mrs. Murphy stood staring at him in the dim shadowy place, almost with hostility.

"Well, if it isn't Clem!" she said presently, in a grudging tone, and she called: "Ellen! It's Clem, thin."

"Well, mama," Ellen's voice, somewhere out of sight, said in a sharp whisper, "let him in. Take him into the dining room!"

But Mrs. Murphy, dimly muttering to herself, had wandered on through the narrow hall toward the kitchen again, and it was Ellen, flushed and with her magnificent mop somewhat tumbled, who came frowning into the hall and guided him into a rather cluttered dining room.

It had been cleared after a fashion since dinner, to be sure, but Joe Kane was there, in his shirt-sleeves, reading the Gump strip to young Flurry, and Monica was sitting listless in a rocker, with Lizzie-Kate's fat big baby in her lap. All of these persons bounced from the room as Ellen brought her visitor in; they could be heard reestablishing themselves in the kitchen.

Ellen looked so gloriously beautiful, with a thin kimono over her office skirt, with her cheeks flushed from light laundry work, her sapphire eyes somewhat questioning and somewhat hostile, and her bobbed mahogany head in some disorder, that Clem felt once again the staggering confusion of senses that she often produced in him, and blundered between felicity and embarrassment into the very words he least wanted to say.

"Couldn't we go into the front room, Ellen? I hate to drive Joe and Monica out of here."

"Monica and mama sleep in the front room," Ellen answered, starkly, briefly, unemotionally.

"Oh, sure—I forgot you were all crowded in here!" Clem stammered, meaning only to be sympathetic. But the blue eyes flashed warning and resentment.

"Now that there's not so many of us left, it seems good to be together!" Ellen answered, with watering eyes.

Clem felt heartsick; she was "mad" at him, he could tell it by her tone. A few months ago, he told his hammering heart, he would have felt quite free to catch the independent little figure in his arms, to crush his own mouth against that rebellious, beautiful, scarlet mouth, and even to shake her into sense. Why, weren't he and Ellen Murphy "as good as bespoke" these two years? Who else had she ever "gone with"? what else did everyone expect?

If he had only settled it all months ago, Clem thought for the hundredth time. What had come over him at all that he hadn't? he asked himself. They had been playing happily along, going everywhere together, understanding each other perfectly without one definite word for months—then suddenly——

Well, suddenly, what? He had begun to make money, and he had said that as soon as his sister Alice's marriage was accomplished and his mother comfortably on her way to Ireland, he and Ellen would be married, of course. But Ellen's grandfather had died, and then her brother, and then the old Murphy home had broken up, and she had seemed so different in her black—demure, remote, inaccessible.

Ellen, who had chattered so excitedly years ago of the hundred dollars or two hundred dollars Clem had been fortunate enough to make in a lucky deal, now seemed strangely apathetic and unresponsive when the hundreds were beginning to be thousands. And now, on this very day, hadn't his own mother come home from a call at the Murphys', with the report that all the talk there was in it was that young Ellen Murphy was going to leave Beatty & Bird, and a pitcher of young Jawn Beatty stuck up in the kitchen as if he was kith and kin to them?

"I know that pitcher; that's just the office employees," Clem had said uncomfortably. But he was uneasy and nervous about the whole matter, and now he had asked her clumsily, "What's this I hear of your leaving the office, Ellen?"

"There was some talk of their sending me to the Chicago office, and I might take mama with me," Ellen answered, superbly composed.

"Who's going to be old Mr. Beatty's stenographer?" Clem asked then, utterly indifferent, but just to say something.

"I don't know!" Ellen said coldly and unencouragingly.

The girl's heart was filled with warm resentment; she felt ashamed to have Clem Riordan find them in this tumbled, odorous confusion, ashamed of her poverty, her own young helplessness in the face of grief and charge; she hated everything tonight, felt furiously, instinctively, that life had trapped her; this was not the way she would have lived, this was not her way of doing things! Dancing upon her light-hearted way a few short months ago, with her little summer frocks always fresh and her canvas slippers always white, she had been able to keep this ugly side of life, as indeed she had been able to keep poverty and grief, happily at a distance.

Now it all lay hideous and bare before this complacent, big young man in the belted overcoat, with the brown gloves—this man whose mother thought Ellen Murphy wanted him!

"Are you going somewheres, Clem?" she asked, with delicate significance.

Clem, almost as unhappy as she, and even more bewildered and uneasy, answered unfortunately: "I couldn't tonight, Ellen. I promised I'd be down to a meeting at the Y. M. I."

Ellen's instant flush was no quicker than the rush of shamed resentment in her heart. He thought that she was inviting him to escort her somewhere!

"I didn't mean that," she said, hurt to the soul. But Clem, blundering on, solely with the idea of reassuring her and defending her from the unwarranted attack of his mother, was speaking.

"Ma seemed to have some idea—I don't know where she got it," he began—"that the passionate adoration I have for you, and always have had since your delicious little-school days, when you wore a black velvet tam on that glorious copper mane," was what he was trying to add, "is less definite on my side than on yours. I only wanted you to know that that isn't true, and I don't believe she thinks it is herself. You must know what I think of you, and that it is only her natural maternal jealousy that makes her pretend that all the girls in the world are trying to capture her only son!"

(Continued on page 123)

By P. G. WODEHOUSE

*The Londoner who makes
2 Laughs Grow
Where
I Grew Before*

The Exit of Battling Billson

Illustrations by T. D. Skidmore



THE THEATER ROYAL, Llundnno, is in the middle of the principal thoroughfare of that repellent town, and immediately opposite its grubby main entrance there is a lamp-post. Under this lamp-post, as I approached, a man was standing. He was a large man, and his air was that of one who has recently passed through some trying experience. There was dust on his person, and he had lost his hat. At the sound of my footsteps he turned, and the rays of the lamp revealed the familiar features of my old friend Stanley Featherstonehaugh Utridge.

"Great Scott!" I ejaculated. "What are you doing here?" There was no possibility of hallucination. It was the man himself in the flesh. And what Utridge, a free agent, could be doing in Llundnno was more than I could imagine. Situated, as its name implies, in Wales, it is a dark, dingy, disheveled spot, inhabited by tough and sinister men with suspicious eyes and three-day beards; and to me, after a mere forty minutes' sojourn in the place, it was incredible that anyone should be there except on compulsion.

Utridge gaped at me incredulously. "Corky, old horse," he said, "this is, upon my Sam, without exception the most amazing event in the world's history. The last bloke I expected to see."

"Same here. Is anything the matter?" I asked, eying his bedraggled appearance.

"Matter? I should say something was the matter!" snorted Utridge, astonishment giving way to righteous indignation. "They chucked me out!"

"Chucked you out? Who? Where from?" "This infernal theater, laddie. After taking my good money, dash it! At least, I got in on my face, but that has nothing to do with the principle of the thing. Corky, my boy, don't you ever go about this world seeking for justice, because there's no such thing under the broad vault of Heaven. I had just gone

"Corky," said Utridge, "I simply can't get over the fact of your being in this blighted town."

out for a breather after the first act, and when I came back I found some fiend in human shape had pinched my seat. And just because I tried to lift the fellow out by the ears, a dozen hired assassins swooped down and shot me out. Me, I'll trouble you! The injured party! Upon my Sam," he said heatedly, with a longing look at the door, "I've a dashed good mind to——"

"I shouldn't," I said soothingly. "After all, what does it matter? It's just one of those things that are bound to happen from time to time. The man of affairs passes them off with a light laugh."

"Yes, but——"

"Come and have a drink."

The suggestion made him waver. The light of battle died down in his eyes. He stood for a moment in thought.

"You wouldn't bung a brick through the window?" he queried doubtfully.

"No, no."

"Perhaps you're right."

He linked his arm in mine and we crossed the road to where the lights of a public house shone like heartening beacons. The crisis was over.

"Corky," said Utridge, warily laying down his mug of beer a few minutes later lest emotion should cause him to spill any of its precious contents, "I can't get over, I simply cannot get over the astounding fact of your being in this blighted town."

The Exit of Battling Billson

I explained my position. My presence in Llundnno was due to the fact that the paper which occasionally made use of my services as a special writer had sent me to compose a fuller and more scholarly report than its local correspondent seemed capable of concocting of the activities of one Evan Jones, the latest of those revivalists who periodically convulse the emotions of the Welsh mining population. His last and biggest meeting was to take place next morning at eleven o'clock.

"But what are you doing here?" I asked.

"What am I doing here?" said Ukridge. "Who, me? Why, where else would you expect me to be? Haven't you heard? Haven't you seen the posters?"

"What posters? I only arrived an hour ago."

"My dear old horse! Then naturally you aren't abreast of local affairs." He drained his mug, breathed contentedly and led me out into the street. "Look!"

He was pointing at a poster, boldly lettered in red and black, which decorated the side wall of the Bon Ton Millinery Emporium. The street-lighting system of Llundnno is defective, but I was able to read what it said.

ODDFELLOWS HALL

Special Ten-Round Contest

LLOYD THOMAS

(Llundnno)

vs

BATTling BILLSON

(Bermondsey)

"Comes off tomorrow night," said Ukridge. "And I don't mind telling you, laddie, that I expect to make a colossal fortune."

"Are you still managing the Battler?" I said, surprised at this dogged perseverance. "I should have thought that after your last two experiences you would have had about enough of it."

"Oh, he means business this time! I've been talking to him like a father."

"How much does he get?"

"Twenty quid."

"Twenty quid? Well, where does the colossal fortune come in? Your share will only be a tanner."

"No, my boy. You haven't got on to my devilish shrewdness. I'm not in on the purse at all this time. I'm the management."

"The management?"

"Well, part of it. You remember Isaac O'Brien, the bookie I was partner with till that chump Looney Coote smashed the business? Izzy Previn is his real name. We've gone shares in this thing. Izzy came down a week ago, hired the hall and looked after the advertising and so on; and I arrived with good old Billson this afternoon. We're giving him twenty quid, and the other fellow's getting another twenty; and all the rest of the cash Izzy and I split on a fifty-fifty basis. Affluence, laddie! That's what it means. Affluence beyond the dreams of a Monte Cristo. Owing to this Jones fellow the place is crowded, and every sportsman for miles around will be there tomorrow at five bob a head, cheaper seats two-and-six, and standing room one shilling. Add lemonade and fried fish privileges, and you have a proposition almost without parallel in the annals of commerce. I couldn't be more on velvet if they gave me a sack and a shovel and let me loose in the Mint."

I congratulated him in suitable terms.

"How is the Battler?" I asked.

"Trained to an ounce. Come see him tomorrow morning."

"I can't. I've got to go to this Jones meeting."

"Oh, yes. Well, make it early in the afternoon, then. Don't come later than three, because he will be resting. We're at Number Seven Caerleon Street. Ask for the Cap and Feathers public house and turn sharp to the left."

I was in a curiously uplifted mood on the following afternoon as I set out to pay my respects to Mr. Billson. This was the

first time I had had occasion to attend one of these revival meetings, and the effect it had had on me was to make me feel as if I had been imbibing large quantities of champagne to the accompaniment of a very loud orchestra. Even before the revivalist rose to speak, the proceedings had had an effervescent quality singularly unsettling to the sober mind, for the vast gathering had begun to sing hymns directly they took their seats; and while the opinion I had formed of the inhabitants of Llundnno was not high, there was no denying their vocal powers.

There is something about a Welsh voice when raised in song that no other voice seems to possess—a creepy, heart-searching quality that gets right into a man's inner consciousness and stirs it up with a pole. And on top of this had come Evan Jones's address.

It did not take me long to understand why this man had gone through the countryside like a flame. He had magnetism, intense earnestness and the voice of a prophet crying in the wilderness. His fiery eyes seemed to single out each individual in the hall, and every time he paused sighings and wailings went up like the smoke of a furnace. And then, after speaking for what I discovered with amazement on consulting my watch was considerably over an hour, he stopped. And I blinked like an aroused somnambulist, shook myself to make sure I was still there, and came away.

And now, as I walked in search of the Cap and Feathers, I was, as I say, oddly exhilarated; and I was strolling along in a sort of trance when a sudden uproar jerked me from my thoughts. I looked about me and saw the sign of the Cap and Feathers over a building across the street.

It was a dubious looking hostelry in a dubious neighborhood; and the sounds proceeding from its interior were not reassuring to a peace-loving pedestrian. There was a good deal of shouting going on and much smashing of glass, and as I stood there the door flew open and a familiar figure emerged rather hastily. A moment later there appeared in the doorway a woman.

She was a small woman, but she carried the largest and most intimid-

inating mop I had ever seen. It dripped dirty water as she brandished it; and the man, glancing apprehensively over his shoulder, proceeded rapidly on his way.

"Hullo, Mr. Billson," I said as he shot by me.

It was not perhaps the best chosen moment for endeavoring to engage him in light conversation. He showed no disposition whatever to linger. He vanished round the corner, and the woman, with a few winged words, gave her mop a victorious flourish and reentered the public house. I walked on, and a little later a huge figure stepped cautiously out of an alleyway and fell into step at my side.

"Didn't recognize you, mister," said Mr. Billson apologetically.

"You seemed in rather a hurry," I agreed.

"R!" said Mr. Billson, and a thoughtful silence descended upon him for a space.

"Who," I asked, tactlessly perhaps, "was your lady friend?"

Mr. Billson looked a trifle sheepish. Unnecessarily, in my opinion. Even heroes may legitimately quail before a mop wielded by an angry woman.

"She come out of a back room," he said with embarrassment. "Started makin' a fuss when she saw what I'd done. So I come away. You can't dot a woman," he argued chivalrously.

"Certainly not," I agreed. "But what was the trouble?"

"I been doin' good," said Mr. Billson virtuously.

"Doing good?"

"Spillin' their beers."

"Whose beers?"

"All of their beers. I went in, and there was a lot of sinful fellers drinkin' beers. So I spilled 'em. All of 'em. Walked



"But think of the money!"
Mr. Izzy Previn implored
Ukridge. "Do you realize
we'll have to return it?"

round and spilled all of them beers, one after the other. Not 'arf surprised, them pore sinners wasn't," said Mr. Billson with what sounded to me not unlike a worldly chuckle.

"I can readily imagine it."

"Huh?"

"I say, I bet they were."

"R!" said Mr. Billson. He frowned. "Beer," he proceeded with cold austerity, "ain't right. Sinful, that's what beer is. It stingeth like a serpent and biteth like a ruddy adder."

My mouth watered a little. Beer like that was what I had been scouring the country for for years. I thought it imprudent, however, to say so.

For some reason which I could not fathom my companion, one as fond of his half-pint as the next man, seemed to have conceived a puritanical hostility to the beverage. I decided to change the subject.

"I'm looking forward to seeing you fight tonight," I said.

He eyed me woodenly. "Me?"

"Yes. At the Oddfellows Hall, you know."

He shook his head. "I ain't fighting at no Oddfellows Hall," he replied. "Not at no Oddfellows Hall nor nowhere else I'm not fighting, not tonight nor no night." He pondered stolidly, and then, as if coming to the conclusion that his last sentence could be improved by the addition of a negative, added "No!"

And having said this, he suddenly stopped and stiffened like a pointing dog; and, looking up to see what interesting object by the wayside had attracted his notice, I perceived that we were standing beneath another public house sign, that of the Blue Boar. Its windows were hospitably open, and through them came a musical clinking of glasses. Mr. Billson licked his lips with a quiet relish.

"Scuse me, mister," he said, and left me abruptly.

My one thought now was to reach Ukridge as quickly as possible in order to acquaint him with these sinister developments. For I was startled. More, I was alarmed and uneasy. In one of the star performers at a special ten-round contest, scheduled to take place that evening, Mr. Billson's attitude seemed to me peculiar, not to say disquieting. So, even though a sudden crash and uproar from the interior of the Blue Boar called invitingly to me to linger, I hurried on and neither stopped, looked nor listened until I stood on the steps of Number Seven Caerleon Street. And eventually, after my prolonged ringing and knocking had finally induced a female of advanced years to come up and open the door, I found Ukridge lying on a horsehair sofa in the far corner of the sitting room.

I unloaded my grave news. It was wasting time to try to break it gently.

"I've just seen Billson," I said, "and he seems to be in rather a strange mood. In fact, I'm sorry to say, old man, he rather gave me the impression—"

"That he wasn't going to fight tonight?" said Ukridge with a strange calm. "Quite correct. He isn't. He's just been in here to tell me so. What I like about the man is his consideration for all concerned. He doesn't want to upset anybody's arrangements."

"But what's the trouble? Is he kicking about only getting twenty pounds?"

"No. He's got religion."

"What!"

"Nothing more nor less, Corky, my boy. Like chumps, we took our eyes off him for half a second this morning, and he sneaked off to that revival meeting. Went out shortly after a light and wholesome breakfast for what he called a bit of a mooch round, and came in half an hour ago a changed man. Full of loving kindness, curse him. Nasty, shifty gleam in his eye. Told us he thought fighting sinful and it was all off, and then buzzed out to spread the Word."

I was shaken to the core. Wilberforce Billson, the peerless but temperamental Battler, had never been an ideal pugilist to manage, but hitherto he had drawn the line at anything like this. Other problems which he might have brought up for his manager to solve might have been overcome

by patience and tact, but not this one. The psychology of Mr. Billson was as an open book to me. He possessed one of those single-track minds capable of accommodating but one idea at a time, and he had the tenacity of the simple soul. Argument would leave him unshaken. On that bone-like head reason would beat in vain. And, these things being so, I was at a loss to account for Ukridge's extraordinary calm. His fortitude in the hour of ruin amazed me. His next remark, however, offered an explanation.

"We're putting on a substitute," he said.

I was relieved. "Oh, you've got a substitute? That's a bit of luck. Where did you find him?"

"As a matter of fact, laddie, I've decided to go on myself."

"What! You!"

"Only way out, my boy. No other solution."

I stared at the man. Years of the closest acquaintance with S. F. Ukridge had rendered me almost surprise-proof at anything he might do, but this was too much.

"Do you mean to tell me that you seriously intend to go out there tonight and appear in the ring?" I cried.

"Perfectly straightforward business-like proposition, old man," said Ukridge stoutly. "I'm in excellent shape. I sparred with Billson every day while he was training."

"Yes, but—"

"The fact is, laddie, you don't realize my potentialities. Recently, it's true, I've allowed myself to become slack and what you might call enervated, but, damme, when I was on that trip in that tramp steamer scarcely a week used to go by without my having a good earnest scrap with somebody. Nothing barred," said Ukridge, musing lovingly on the carefree past, "except biting and bottles."

"Yes, but, hang it—a professional pugilist!"

"Well, to be absolutely accurate, laddie," said Ukridge, suddenly dropping the heroic manner and becoming confidential,



Mr. Billson showed no disposition to linger. Even heroes may legitimately quail before a mop wielded by an angry woman.

The Exit of Battling Billson

"the thing's going to be fixed. Izzy Previn has seen the bloke Thomas's manager and has arranged a gentleman's agreement. The manager, a Class A bloodsucker, insists on us giving him man another twenty pounds after the fight, but that can't be helped. In return, the Thomas bloke consents to play light for three rounds, at the end of which period, laddie, he will tap me on the side of the head and I shall go down and out, a popular loser. What's more, I'm allowed to hit him hard—once—just so long as it isn't on the nose. So you see—a little tact, a little diplomacy, and the whole thing fixed up as satisfactorily as anyone could wish."

"But suppose the audience demands its money back when they find they're going to see a substitute?"

"My dear old horse," protested Ukridge, "surely you don't imagine that a man with a business head like mine overlooked that? Naturally I'm going to fight as Battling Billson. Nobody knows him in this town. I'm a good big chap, just as much a heavyweight as he is. No, laddie, pick how you will, you can't pick a flaw in this."

"Why mayn't you hit him on the nose?"

"I don't know. People have these strange whims. And now, Corky, my boy, I think you had better leave me. I ought to relax."

The Oddfellows Hall was certainly filling up nicely when I arrived that night. Indeed, it seemed as though Llundnno's devotees of sport would cram it to the roof. I took my place in the line before the pay window, and, having completed the business end of the transaction, went in and inquired my way to the dressing rooms. And presently, after wandering through divers passages, I came upon Ukridge, clad for the ring and swathed in his familiar yellow mackintosh.

"You're going to have a wonderful house," I said. "The populace is rolling up in shoals."

He received the information with a strange lack of enthusiasm. I looked at him in concern and was disquieted by his forlorn appearance. That face, which had beamed so triumphantly at our last meeting, was pale and set. Those eyes, which normally shone with the flame of an unquenchable optimism, seemed dull and careworn. And even as I looked at him he seemed to rouse himself from a stupor and, reaching out for his shirt, which hung on a near-by peg, proceeded to pull it over his head.

"What's the matter?" I asked.

His head popped out of the shirt, and he eyed me wanly.

"I'm off," he announced briefly.

"Off? How do you mean, off?" I tried to soothe what I took to be an eleventh hour attack of stage fright. "You'll be all right." Ukridge laughed hollowly. "Once the gong goes, you'll forget the crowd."

"It isn't the crowd," said Ukridge in a pale voice, climbing into his trousers. "Corky, old man, if ever you feel your angry passions rising to the point where you want to swat a stranger, restrain yourself. This bloke Thomas was in here a moment ago with his manager to settle the final details. He's the fellow I had the trouble with at the theater last night!"

"The man you pulled out of the seat by his ears?" I gasped.

Ukridge nodded. "Recognized me at once, confound him, and it was all his manager, a thoroughly decent cove, whom I liked, could do to prevent him getting at me there and then."

"Good Lord!" I said, aghast at this grim development, yet thinking how thoroughly characteristic it was of Ukridge, when he had a whole townful of people to quarrel with, to pick the one professional pugilist.

At this moment, when Ukridge was lacing his left shoe, the door opened and a man came in.

The newcomer was small, dark and beady-eyed, and from his manner of easy comradeship and the fact that, when he spoke, he supplemented words with the language of the waving palm, I deduced that this must be Mr. Izzy Previn, recently trading as Isaac O'Brien. He was cheeriness itself.

"Vell," he said with ill-timed exuberance, "how'th the boy?" The boy cast a sour look at him. "The house," proceeded Mr. Previn with an almost lyrical enthusiasm, "is abtholutely full. Crammed, jammed and packed. They're hanging from the roof by their eyelids. It'th goin' to be a knockout."

The expression, considering the circumstances, could hardly have been less happily chosen. Ukridge winced painfully, then spoke in no uncertain voice.

"I'm not going to fight!"

Mr. Previn's exuberance fell from him like a garment. His cigar dropped from his mouth, and his beady eyes glittered with sudden consternation.

"What do you mean?"

"Rather an unfortunate thing has happened," I explained. "It seems that this man Thomas is a fellow Ukridge had trouble with at the theater last night."

"What do you mean, Ukridge?" broke in Mr. Previn. "This is Battling Billson."

"I've told Corky all about it," said Ukridge over his shoulder as he laced his right shoe. "Old pal of mine."

"Oh!" said Mr. Previn, relieved. "Of course, if Mr. Corky is a friend of yours and quite understands that all this is quite private among ourselves and don't want talking about outside, all right. But what were you thayin'? I can't make head or tail of it. How do you mean you're not goin' to fight? Of course you're goin' to fight."

"Thomas was in here just now," I said. "Ukridge and he had a row at the theater last night, and naturally Ukridge is afraid he will go back on the agreement."

"Nonthense," said Mr. Previn, and his manner was that of one soothing a refractory child. "He won't go back on the agreement. He promised he'd play light and he will play light. Gave me his word as a gentleman."

"He isn't a gentleman," Ukridge pointed out moodily.

"But lithen!"

"I'm going to get out of here as quick as I dashed well can!"

"Conthider!" pleaded Mr. Previn, clawing great chunks out of the air. Ukridge began to button his collar. "Reflect!" moaned Mr. Previn. "There's that lovely audience all sitting out there, jammed like thardines, waiting for the thing to start. Do you expect me to go and tell 'em there ain't goin' to be no fight? I'm thurprised at you," said Mr. Previn, trying an appeal to his pride. "Where's your manly spirit? A big, husky feller like you, that's done all sorts of scrappin' in your time—"

"Not," Ukridge pointed out coldly, "with any professional pugilists who've got a grievance against me."

"He won't hurt you."

"He won't get the chance."

"You'll be as safe and cozy in that ring with him as if you was playing ball with your little thister."

Ukridge said he didn't have a little sister.

"But think!" implored Mr. Previn, flapping like a seal. "Think of the money! Do you realize we'll have to return it all, every penny of it?"



Mr. Billson was pained, but more spiritually than physically. Then he turned the other cheek.

A spasm of pain passed over Ukridge's face, but he continued buttoning his collar.

"And not only that," said Mr. Previn, "but, if you ask me, they'll be so mad when they hear there ain't goin' to be no fight they'll lynch me"—Ukridge seemed to regard this possibility with calm—"and you, too," added Mr. Previn.

Ukridge started. It was a plausible theory, and one that had not occurred to him before.

He paused irresolutely.

And at this moment a man came hurrying in.

"What's the matter?" he demanded fussily. "Thomas has been in the ring for five minutes. Isn't your man ready?"

"In one-half tick," said Mr. Previn. He turned meaningfully to Ukridge. "That's right, ain't it? You'll be ready in half a tick?"

Ukridge nodded wanly. In silence he shed shirt, trousers, shoes and collar, parting from them as if they were old friends whom he never expected to see again. One wistful glance he cast at his mackintosh, lying forlornly across a chair, and then, with more than a suggestion of a funeral procession, we started down the corridor that led to the main hall. The hum of many voices came to us; there was a sudden blaze of light; and we were there.

I must say for the sport-loving citizens of Llundnno that they appeared to be fair-minded men. Stranger in their midst though he was, they gave Ukridge an excellent reception as he climbed into the ring; and for a moment, such is the tonic effect of applause on a large scale, his depression seemed to lift. A faint, gratified smile played about his drawn mouth, and I think it would have developed into a bashful grin had he not at this instant caught sight of the redoubtable Mr. Thomas towering massively across the way. I saw him blink as one who, thinking absently of this and that, walks suddenly into a lamp-post; and his look of unhappiness returned.

My heart bled for him. If the offer of my little savings in the bank could have transported him there and then to the safety of his London lodgings, I would have made it unreservedly. Mr. Previn had disappeared, leaving me standing at the ring-side, and as nobody seemed to object I remained there, thus getting an excellent view of the mass of bone and sinew that made up Lloyd Thomas. And there was certainly plenty of him to see.

Mr. Thomas was, I should imagine, one of those men who do not look their most formidable in mufti, for otherwise I could not conceive how even the fact that he had stolen his seat could have led Ukridge to lay the hand of violence upon him. In the exiguous costume of the ring he looked a person from whom the sensible man would suffer almost any affront with meekness. He was about six feet in height, and wherever a man could bulge with muscle he bulged. For a moment my anxiety for Ukridge was tinged with a wistful regret that I should never see this sinewy citizen in action with Mr. Billson. It would, I mused, have been a battle worth coming even to Llundnno to see.

The referee, meanwhile, had been introducing the principals in the curt, impressive fashion of referees. He now retired, and with a strange, foreboding note a gong sounded on the farther side of the ring. The seconds scuttled under the ropes. The man Thomas, struggling—it seemed to me—with powerful emotions, came ponderously out of his corner.

In these reminiscences of a vivid and varied career, it is as a profound thinker that I have for the most part had occasion to portray Stanley Featherstonehaugh Ukridge. I was now to be reminded that he also had it in him to be a doer. Even as Mr. Thomas

shuffled toward him, his left fist shot out and thudded against the other's ribs. In short, in a delicate and difficult situation Ukridge was comporting himself with an adequacy that surprised me. However great might have been his reluctance to embark on

this contest, once in he was doing well.

And then, halfway through the first round, the truth dawned upon me. Injured though Mr. Thomas had been, the gentleman's agreement still held. The word of a Thomas was as good as his bond. Poignant though his dislike of Ukridge might be, nevertheless, having pledged himself to mildness and self-restraint for the first three rounds, he intended to abide by the contract. Probably, in the interval between his visit to Ukridge's dressing room and his appearance in the ring, his manager had been talking earnestly to him. At any rate, whether it was managerial authority or his own sheer nobility of character that influenced him, the fact remains that he treated Ukridge with a quite remarkable forbearance, and the latter reached his corner at the end of round one practically intact.

And it was this that undid him. No sooner had the gong sounded for round two than out he pranced from his corner, thoroughly above himself. He bounded at Mr. Thomas like a dervish.

I could read his thoughts as if he had spoken them. Nothing could be clearer than that he had altogether failed to grasp the true position of affairs. Instead of recognizing his adversary's forbearance for what it was and being decently grateful for it, he was filled with a sinful pride. Here, he told himself, was a man who had a solid grievance against him, and, dash it, the fellow couldn't hurt him a bit. What the whole thing boiled down to, he felt, was that he, Ukridge, was better than he had expected, a man to be reckoned with, and one who could show a distinguished gathering of patrons of sport something worth looking at. The consequence was that, where any sensible person would have grasped the situation at once and endeavored to show his appreciation by toying with Mr. Thomas in gingerly fashion, whispering soothing compliments into his ear during the clinches and generally trying to lay the foundations of a beautiful friendship against the moment when the gentleman's agreement should lapse, Ukridge committed the one unforgivable act. There was a brief moment of fiddling and feinting in the center of the ring, then a sharp smacking sound, a startled yelp, and Mr. Thomas, with gradually reddening eye, leaning against the ropes muttering to himself in Welsh.

Ukridge had hit him on the nose.

Once more I must pay a tribute to the fair-mindedness of the sportsmen of Llundnno. The stricken man was one of them—possibly Llundnno's favorite son; yet nothing could have exceeded the heartiness with which they greeted the visitor's achievement. A shout went up as if Ukridge had done each individual present a personal favor. It continued as he advanced buoyantly upon his antagonist, and—to show how entirely Llundnno audiences render themselves impartial and free from any personal bias—it became redoubled as Mr. Thomas, swinging a fist like a ham, knocked Ukridge flat on his back. Whatever happened, so long as it was sufficiently violent, seemed to be all right with that broad-minded audience.

Ukridge heaved himself laboriously to one knee. His sensibilities had been ruffled by this unexpected blow about fifteen times as hard as the others he had received since the beginning of the affray, but he was a man of mettle and determination. He struggled painfully to his feet, while Mr. Thomas, now definitely abandoning the gentleman's agreement, hovered about him with ready fists, only restrained by the fact that one of Ukridge's gloves still touched the floor.

(Continued on page 140)



"I seen 'im," said Billson, "puttin' all that money into a liddle bag. I always knew 'e was a wrong 'un."

By MONTAGUE GLASS — Stories

THE status of the Englishman in his home, which according to the legal maxim is his castle, varies with the temperament and disposition of his chatelaine. He is alternately loved and feared, as in the case of the Englishwoman who during the war received a black eye in an altercation with a bill collector.



"Ow am I going to explain this," she wailed, "with everybody knowing my 'usband is away at the front and everything?"

On the other hand, another Englishwoman complained bitterly to her neighbor, Mrs. Hickson, about a piece of bad luck that had befallen her.

"No, my 'usband ain't killed, Mrs. 'Ickson," she said. "No sooner did I put the kids in mournin', even Biby in the pram, when I received a telegram saying 'e's alive and well. Yes, and all the expense for nothing."

"It's a crool shime," Mrs. Hickson said. "That's what I call it."

MR. LOUIS MARSHALL, the eminent New York attorney, began his career in Elmira, New York, and at its outset was not burdened with too much legal business. The following story is told about how he obtained his first client. It may be and probably is apocryphal, but the circumstances are alleged to be as follows:

A man was arraigned for trial in the Supreme Court upon an indictment for grand larceny.

"Have you any counsel?" the judge asked.

"No, your honor," the prisoner replied.

"Can you afford to employ a lawyer?" the judge inquired.

"No, your honor," the prisoner answered.

"Then in that case," the judge said, "I shall have to assign you counsel."

He pointed to three exceedingly callow attorneys in the court-room.

"There are Mr. Smith, Mr. Jones and Mr. Robinson," the judge continued, "and," he added, "Mr. Marshall is outside in the corridor."

The prisoner looked critically at the three attorneys in the court-room.

"All right," he said, "I'll take Mr. Marshall."

MANCHESTER, England, is one of the few European towns that possesses a lot of local boosters. It vaunts such slogans as "Manchester goods for Manchester docks," and I wouldn't be a bit surprised if some day when I return to Manchester—my birthplace, by the way—I should see a sign at the city limits, reading: "YOU ARE NOW ENTERING MANCHESTER, A CITY OF OVER 600,000. Careful Driving Will Be Appreciated by the Selectmen."

In other words it is the Wichita, Kansas, of Lancashire, England, and we Manchester lads are quite proud of the old town, as witness the story of the private in the Lancashire regiment who was found by a chaplain beating a balky artillery horse.

"Don't beat that horse," the chaplain cried. "Talk to him, man. Talk to him."



The private solemnly took the horse by the head-stall and by way of beginning a conversation, he said: "Ah coom frae Manchester."

ONE of the things they don't teach pupil nurses in hospital training schools is not to leave their fountain pens around where patients can reach them.

Somebody told me a story the other day of a man who had been operated upon for appendicitis in a large New York sanitarium at a time when nurses were occupied with an influenza epidemic. He had been furnished with a young, good-looking night nurse who had only recently graduated from a training school and was not accustomed to working without supervision. Also, she left her fountain pen unguarded and failed to conceal the chart from the patient. One morning early the attending physician entered the room and picked up the chart before examining the patient.

The last entry was as follows:

"2 A. M. Patient very restless. Nurse sleeping soundly."

AGAIN we are confronted with the moot point, "When can a man be said to be intoxicated?" In the United States at least it cannot now be asserted that it occurs at that stage of intoxication where the patient wishes to kiss the bartender. I use the word *patient* instead of *defendant* because the point is here raised as a medical and not a legal question. In the Hammersmith London Police Court the other day, however, the matter was discussed in its legal aspect.

"How did you know the defendant was intoxicated?" the magistrate asked the policeman.

"Well, your worship," the policeman replied, "after he was thrown out of the front entrance of the kinema, he was discovered with a large bouquet in his arms sitting on the doorsteps of the back entrance."

"Did he give any reason for this extraordinary behavior?" the magistrate asked.

"His speech was very indistinct, your worship," the officer answered, "but from what I could gather, he was waiting to see Mary Pickford."

NONE of us precisely weeps with the talented Don Marquis's character, "The Old Soak," over the passing of the barroom and the bartender. An occasional voice such as mine will grow a trifle husky, and one or two of the older set become markedly sentimental when speaking about this or that drink mixer who acted as guide, philosopher and friend to so many of our more unfortunate dipsomaniacs.

It is said, for instance, that Samuel Mason Van Cott, who ran the bar in the old Grape Vine Saloon on Market Street, San Francisco, near the ferry, was at all times ready and willing to accede to the most exigent demands of his customers. He never refused a slight loan, and if the favor requested of him involved no monetary outlay at all, he fairly outdid himself in granting it.

One day he was serving a number of Englishmen who had just landed from the Australian boat.



That Have Made Me LAUGH

Illustrations by Rea Irvin

"What will you have, gents?" Sam inquired.
"We're in a big 'urry," one of the Englishmen said, "and we want six 'ighballs."

Sam turned to Manuel, the brass cleaner.

"Manuel," he said, "these gentlemen are in a big hurry and they want six eyeballs. I don't know what they want them for, but go out and catch three Chinamen."

THERE is an etiquette about earthquakes which forbids them to occur in the neighborhood of new California real estate developments. Earthquakes don't know about this, and so they do occur there, and add occasionally to the troubles of householders, which troubles include among others a scarcity of domestic servants. Almost any kind of general houseworker is welcomed in these parts, and some maids are tolerated whose behavior among the crockery is second only to that of an earthquake.

Thus a friend of ours, Mrs. Phil Johnson, came through a recent earthquake without suffering the slightest nervousness because of the earthquake. She was disturbed at eleven o'clock at night by the noise of china breaking, the banging about of cooking utensils and finally by the fall of the kitchen ceiling. Sighing resignedly, she went to the head of the stairs and called down in a patient, forbearing tone:

"Well, Lizzie, what are you doing now?"

THE crux of the domestic service problem is of course the long hours of labor. Some people feel impelled to claim at a bridge game that coffee never disturbs their sleep and then prove it by routing out the cook at midnight to make a potful. Others can't get along without a cup of tea being brought to their bedside at seven o'clock every morning, and between the two Judge Gary stands out as an advocate of shorter and brighter hours of labor for the industrial classes.

Mr. Ramsay MacDonald says that the hardest kind of labor will be cheerfully performed for low wages if the hours are short and plenty of time for rest and recuperation is afforded the laborer. He exemplifies it by the following story:

An English mother was telling about the new job her son had just gotten.

"All 'e 'as to do is to go down to the circus every day and put 'is head in the lion's mouth," she said. "The rest of the time 'e 'as to 'imself."

SPEAKING of the Australian boat and the passing of creature comforts reminds me of a story I heard from a British colonel in the bodega which for many years flourished and still waves as a bright flag in the breeze, to quote Austin Strong, at the corner of the rue de Rivoli and the rue Castiglione in Paris. It was over a glass of Sandeman's best port—and in case anybody thinks this is an advertisement, let me remind him of the newspaper proprietor who refused to print in a critical notice of a concert that Mischa Elman had played a Mendelssohn concerto on a genuine Stradivarius.

"If Mr. Stradivarius wants us to advertise his brand of fiddles," the newspaper proprietor said, "our advertising columns are open to him at two dollars a line."

To resume the story, however:

The British colonel told me that at the outset of the war some of the Australian troops who had come straight from the bush possessed rather strange ideas of discipline. "Now then, lads," an Australian captain said to his company one morning, "an English general is coming round to inspect you. Keep steady, no spitting, and for Heaven's sake, don't call me Alf."

ROBERT LORRAINE the actor says that illiteracy has practically disappeared in England except among the post-war millionaires. One of them was studying what he believed to be the bill of fare in a fashionable London restaurant. He pointed out an item with a pudgy forefinger.

"I think," he said to the waiter, "I'll take some of that."
"I'm sorry, sir," the waiter replied, "but the band is playing that, sir."

THE following letter, addressed to a social worker in an East Side girls' club, speaks for itself in moving yet not uncertain language.

Dear Miss:

I am sorry to tell you something what happened the day before you went away. Sarah Margoninsky begun to fight with me and I told her I do not want to fight with such tough. She wanted to fight because she had her friends with her. She begun to fight and Sarah Margoninsky gave me a punch in my nose so she put the bone out of place so I am in the hospital. I will come home on Thursday. I am writing this letter stating what sort of girls we have in our club. I am writing this letter in a bad condition because I could hardly write this letter. I had to lay in bed and I had to hold my nose up so I could hardly write this letter. Please excuse my writing. My mother said that if you would not stop that business that I cannot come to the club. It is very series. And Sarah Margoninsky was telling a lie that I was talking about Lillie and I am not afraid of all of them but if God will help me to come out of the hospital I will give it to her. I will cripple her and my mother is going to watch her. I wish you have a very nice New Year party, but I cannot rejoice it.

Yours truly

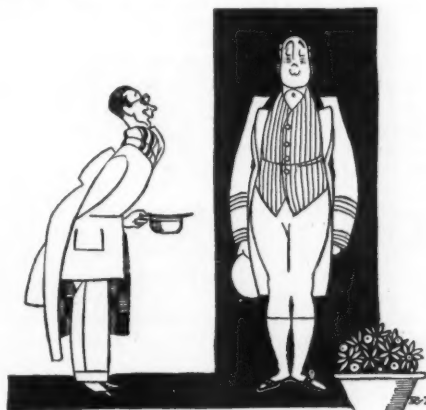
Yetta Levinson

THE good newspaper man if sent out by his city editor to get a story will never return without it. He will camp on the job until it "breaks," that is to say, if there is any chance of its "breaking" at all. For instance, a reporter from the Daily Mail called at a house on Berkeley Square under instruction from his city editor and was admitted by an old family retainer.

"Good morning," the reporter said. "At what hour did his Lordship die?"

"His Lordship isn't dead yet," the retainer replied.

"Oh! Isn't he?" the reporter said. "Then I'll wait."



True As Steel

(Continued from page 29)

wonderful success. He says I'm a marvelous salesman. You'd never know me."

"I don't believe I would. I don't believe I do. Let's get acquainted."

"Fine! Tomorrow we'll start in all over again. I'm heartbroken that I can't be home to dinner, but you didn't let us know you were coming."

"Can't you break the engagement with your young man?"

"Lord! it would cost the firm a big order. He's not a young man. I have no young man. This fellow is a big old brute from Chicago. He's crazy about me, and he's really rather nice. But you know how business is. You always told mother that big deals were put over across a luncheon table. But with us business women, the murder is done at a cabaret between dances—and during them."

He turned scarlet. "You don't mean to tell me—"

"I didn't mean to. I don't want to. But business is business, popsy. I'm a parasite no longer like the old-fashioned woman who—"

"Stop!" he gasped. "Don't start that old stuff. I don't want to hear all that again."

"Again? It's not again from me. This is a new line of talk for me."

He felt his face lose all its blood. Then he felt the backwash of a blush—of rage more than of shame. Yet shame was there, too, and helplessness.

In that confession by a mere change of complexion she read him. She laughed with childish rapture at discovering him, as she had laughed as a little tot when they played hide-and-seek. Then she studied him with an old wizened look. She caught a quick breath, and sighed, "Bang, goes another illusion!" Then she forced a smile of maternal pity and shook off a tear. She shook off also the tenderness and laughed harshly.

"Don't be afraid, dad. I won't tell on you. You and I understand that business is business."

He groaned and clenched her in his arms while their world reeled. She saved the day by unwinding herself from his embrace and stammering:

"But I've just time to change my clothes. A business woman must not be late—and I'm a financier now." She dashed to her room and closed the door.

A little later his wife came up the stairs. She was very glad to see him, but weary a little of the day and of life.

She was magnificent, but fatigued; full of gossip and small talk about the servants, the children, the relatives, the sick, the church, the prices at the shops, the new golf committee at the country club. She did not ask him about his activities beyond an indifferent:

"Get your business finished in New York all right?"

"Yes, honey."

"Was it hot there? Awful hot here."

"Pretty warm!"

It was wonderfully comfortable to have her so un-clever.

Then their daughter flashed from her bedroom with a hasty word, "Farewell."

She was gorgeous, slim, limber, stripped to the legal verge. What was hidden was more emphatic than the rest, for she was encased in a marvelous new cloth that had the blaze of steel armor and the fluency of silk floss. It was hardly more than a metallic paint advertising the lissome nymph beneath.

Her father felt it almost a sacrilege to look at her.

She was a whirlwind of affection, and as uncontrollable. She flung her scented arms about the necks of her father and

about your very long stay in New York have I?"

He shook his head witlessly.

The air was full of accusing eyes. Prosecuting attorneys surrounded him, shaking condemnatory forefingers.

But his wife seemed like the cleverer lawyer who masks his wiles under a sleepy manner, as she went on:

"What are business women like, in your experience?"

He laughed nervously. "Well, they're of all sorts."

"Oh, of course; but are you glad or sorry that your daughter has gone into business?"

If he said he was glad, she could tell that he lied. If he said he was sorry, she might ask him why. He shrugged his shoulders and spread his hands in the primeval gesture of helplessness. His wife went on:

"Ethel keeps talking of her ideal as a Mrs. Boutelle she read about, who saved her husband from bankruptcy and is at the head of a big department in—the firm you deal with in New York. What's its name? Ethel said she was going to ask you if you met her while you were there. Did she?"

"I think not!" Parry said and slapping his knee to hide his confusion, rose, saying: "Dinner ought to be ready, oughtn't it?"

"Did you?" his wife asked. He pretended not to hear her till she said again, "Did you?"

"Did I what?" He turned and gave her a look of wretchedly overacted stupidity.

His wife gazed at him with sudden fear. Then she shut her eyes a moment. They were wet when the lids disclosed them again.

"Did I what?" he repeated desperately. "Nothing. I think dinner must be ready."

He felt sure that her unanswered question was already answered all too well in her sad heart. Her intuition must serve for his confession. His absolution must depend upon time and her meek acceptance of the good old-fashioned double standard.

She had little to say during the dinner, and she kept her eyes from his. As he studied her across a little wall of roses and forget-me-nots she seemed extraordinarily beautiful.

Was it a trick of light or was her hair really going white?

Whatever it was, her head was surrounded with a shimmer like a halo of martyrdom.

She who had been so intimate and so clingingly timid looked suddenly very brave, very lonely, very remote.

Which was the more heroic woman? The one who went out to fight her own way like the young Amazon, their daughter; or the one who stayed at home to keep a home, and wondered what went on in the business world?

Parry had no answer, unless it were to admire and to feel sorry for both.

WE are as disappointed as you that on account of illness H. C. Witwer could not complete the final draft of his new story in time for this issue. It is announced on our cover because we had expected it up to the last minute.

But you will have it in the January issue—and we might add that as a cheerful beginning for the New Year "William Tells" is hard to beat. [R. L.]

mother, leaving powder and rouge for remembrance.

Then she was gone.

Parry and his wife were stunned awhile, then his wife said:

"Frank, honey, I'm worried about Ethel. She's so wild, so flippant about serious things and so serious about unwomanly things. She took a sudden streak to go into business, and I couldn't stop her. What can parents do nowadays? We have no legal rights any more. She works hard, she's up early no matter how late she goes to bed. She saves her money, pays her own way, talks politics, reads the Wall Street news first. It's amazing, but it scares me so! This world of business, Frank—is it safe for women?"

He dodged frankly.

"Is any place safe for women—or men, for that matter?"

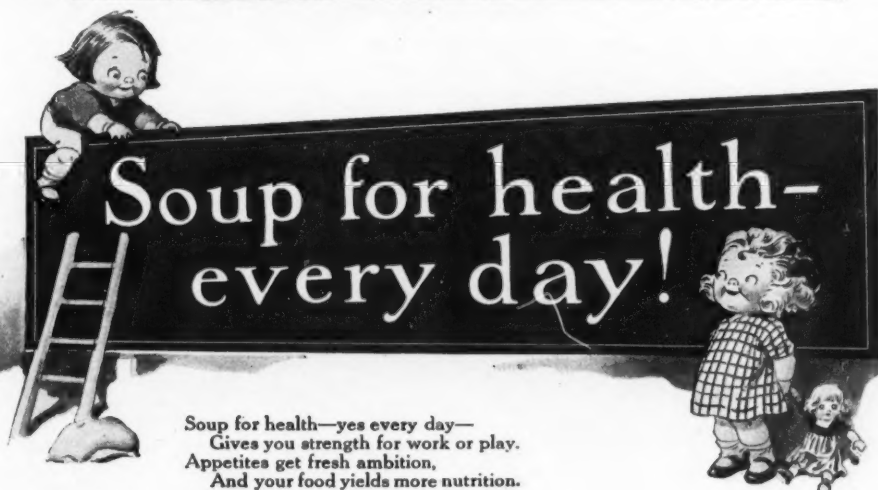
"Oh, some people can go wrong anywhere. But they're the exception. These business women, though; all day long alone with men, meeting them on an equal plane, competing with them—how can it help but destroy something? Doesn't it? You know so many business women. Are they—are they—well, you know."

He stared at her in a wide-eyed terror of her uncanny cross-examination. She mistook it for horror of her tactlessness. She apologized.

"Oh, I'm not criticizing you. I never annoy you with jealousy or suspicion. It used to hurt me fearfully at first to have you away, but I hardly ever think of it any more. I don't ask you questions as a rule, now do I? I haven't said a word

Phyllis Duganne, you know, writes young love stories that are as romantic and different as her own name: You will find an especially delightful one in a forthcoming COSMOPOLITAN

MANY A MEAL IS MADE ON SOUP



Good hot soup nourishes and invigorates. It tones digestion. It is both food and appetizer. Eat it every day. Physicians will tell you how good it is for you. But prove it to yourself with Campbell's Vegetable Soup—that hearty and delicious blend of thirty-two different ingredients, including fifteen tempting vegetables, strength-giving cereals, invigorating broth of fine beef. Here is real food in plentiful measure, a treat to your taste—a tonic wholesome dish that benefits as much as it satisfies. Countless people make it the main dish of their luncheon or supper. And, of course, it is a big part of any dinner.

Luncheon Dinner Supper



Campbell's SOUPS

LOOK FOR THE RED-AND-WHITE LABEL

Marriage Under Two Roofs

(Continued from page 31)

intimates, "I want to be alone"? He is there with you in your common home. It is evening. You have been apart all day, and yet he wants to be alone! Outrageous! To sit and read in separate rooms under the same roof! Unnatural! Not to be borne! *Why did he come home if he wanted to be alone?*

Why?

Obviously because he had no home of his own to go to. Now put my scheme into operation. Give him a place of his own, completely outside of your jurisdiction, a place where he keeps his clothes, where he normally sleeps, to which he goes quite simply and naturally whenever he wants to, without explanations and without fear of reproach. At the morning telephone rendezvous you have agreed not to spend the evening together. You may be a little lonely the first few times this happens, but you soon get to like your "vacations" and to plan for them. You may have a friend in for dinner whom your husband takes no pleasure in. You may arrange for some kind of recreation, dancing, music, lecture or what-not for which he has no taste, or you may be tired enough to enjoy a few hours of solitude by your own hearth.

In any case his absence is a refreshment, a chance to be yourself for a while in a rich, free sense which nothing but a separate roof can give you.

Women, more than men, succumb to marriage. They sink so easily into that fatal habit of depending on one person to rescue them from themselves. And this is the death of love.

The two-roof plan encourages a wife to cultivate initiative in rescuing herself, to develop social courage, to look upon her life as an independent adventure and get interested in it. And every Victorian tradition to the contrary, it is thus only that she can retain her charm down the years.

I wish I could set forth as freely and frankly my husband's feeling about this new scheme of life as I can my own. But he is not the sort of man who talks easily about himself. He is what the psychoanalysts call an "introvert." I know from a hundred signs that he likes it, but I can only guess why.

Most women tend to own and manage their husbands too much, and I am not free from that vice. Much of John's depression and irritability which used to be so baffling to me in the old days was due, I am sure, to his having no escape from me, no place where I did not come, no retreat from my influence. Now he has one. Often when we lived under the same roof he must have said to himself, "I love her but I can't stand her. She is too much for me." Now I know he never feels that.

People with very simple natures probably do not suffer from this pressure of one personality on the other in marriage. But for the usual modern type, the complex, sensitive, highly organized city dweller, man or woman, marriage can become such

a constant invasion of his very self that it amounts sometimes to torture.

I am the last one to deny that there are successful marriages. I know ideally mated couples who can say to this argument with sincerity:

"But we don't want to get away from each other. We are perfectly happy as we are."

And I can answer only, "Bless you my children; there is nothing in this gospel for you."

Nor is there anything in it for young lovers in the first months of ecstasy and anguish, nor for parents, during the first baby's first year, nor for couples of whom one is a natural door-mat, nor for the excessively domestic man who wants to know the price of everything to a penny, how often the baby falls down and what the cook does on her afternoon off. (Though in this case no doubt the wife needs a retreat.)

No, I am speaking only to those who are discouraged with marriage, who have given it a good trial and found it extremely difficult. But I am sure I shall have a large audience.

Ours is not an extreme case. My husband is a bit temperamental but he has great charm. I am a "strong-minded" woman, perhaps, but not over-strong. We have hosts of friends who find us both good-natured, generous, easy to get along with. We are both of us intelligent. We can both take a joke. And I think we had more genuine love and respect for each other than is common.

Yet marriage was destroying us. We just lived from storm to storm, with tears, an emotional reconciliation and a brief lull of happiness between.

Now that we live under two roofs there are no storms, no quarrels, no tears. Our differences of opinion are not passionate and unbearable. They have an almost rational quality. Criticisms and suggestions are made with the gentleness and reserve that is common between friends. They are received with the open-minded forbearance of one who can be sure of the critic's early departure.

And as for love, we seem to have found it again. The hours we spend together have actually caught back some of the surprising gaiety and warm glow of sweetheart days.

What is the meaning of this all but universal habit of quarrelling among the married?

When a friend irritates you or, as we say, gets on your nerves, you do not have to quarrel with her. You know she is going home pretty soon, or you are going home—a natural and inevitable separation will take place.

But with a husband or a wife there is no hope, nothing to look forward to. You cannot good-naturedly walk away, because you have no place to go. *His home—or her home—is your home.* This fact increases your irritation five hundredfold, and some outlet must be had.

Stormy quarrels, no matter how tender and intimate the interval between, are

wearing to soul and body. But they are not nearly so devastating, I believe, as that much more common type of married quarrelling which resolves itself into being a little mean to each other all the time.

Just who is there who does not know at least one couple like that—their conversation with each other made up almost entirely of small slighting remarks, each constantly belittling the achievements and enthusiasms of the other; kindly people in their relations with outsiders but always somewhat bitter and belligerent toward each other? Is anything less enjoyable than visiting in such a home? Is it really good for children to grow up in such an atmosphere?

Perhaps divorce is the only remedy for difficult marriages. But if my theory is correct, if it is the too constant sharing of one home, with no easy and normal method of escape, which primarily makes them difficult, then some loosening of the time-and-space conventions so bound up with marriage is worth trying. Separate beds, separate rooms, have not done much to reconcile people to marriage. Why not take a bold romantic step and try separate roofs?

It will seem to many that in setting forth this new plan for achieving a happy marriage I have avoided the crucial test, that my argument can be challenged at its very heart.

Crudely put, the challenge is: "If my husband sleeps under a separate roof, how do I know that he is always alone?" or again: "If I don't go home every night, how do I know that some other man is not there in my place?" In a literal and exact sense you don't know. That is the answer.

But after all, marriage, like business, is founded on trust.

When a husband goes off to work in the morning, does he *know* that his wife is not going to neglect her children and make love to the plumber? He hopes she isn't, of course, but he cannot be absolutely sure. It would not be practical to ring her up every fifteen minutes to inquire; if he is to get on with his work, he must trust her.

And as for the poor wife, how can she know that her bread-winner is not spending the entire morning kissing the stenographer, unless she squanders what she has saved up for the children's winter coats on a dictograph?

In the most conventional marriage there must be a considerable area of confidence as to the technical faithfulness of the parties. In marriage under two roofs you deliberately extend that area of confidence, that is all.

If one is of a very jealous disposition this may take some courage, but it is courage soon rewarded, for in this matter of marital faithfulness, as all wise women know, increasing the confidence usually lessens the risk. The two-roof demands confidence during those very hours of ease when temptation is greatest; this cannot be denied.

But if it brings happiness where there was misery before, even that risk is well taken, for happiness is the only security.

W. Somerset Maugham, George Ade, Berton Braley, O. O. McIntyre, John T. McCutcheon—these are some of the feature writers who add a crisp sparkle of wit and comment to January COSMOPOLITAN



Shirts enjoy the gentle dousing in Fels-Naptha soapy water. It sets them free from dirt, and they retain their youthful color.

Baby's rompers are delighted to escape destructive rubbing. Fels-Naptha makes them clean and sweet by soaking.

If clothes could talk ~

"We want Fels-Naptha!" they would shout in chorus. Self-defense would prompt them to do it!

Do you think clothes relish hard rubbing, or the pulling, straining and tearing of their tender fibres that result from ordinary washing, and shorten their life? They *do* enjoy the safe quick way in which Fels-Naptha separates the dirt from their delicate meshes.

Why? The real naptha in Fels-Naptha not only loosens surface dirt easily—it goes deep down through every thread and unlocks the grip of ground-in dirt completely. The soapy water flushes it away and the clothes are thoroughly clean and sweet and wholesome.

All clothes need Fels-Naptha Cleanliness! And you need the saving in work—and in wear on your clothes.

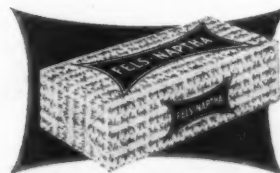
There has never been anything like this unusual combination of real naptha and splendid soap for safely making clothes clean and healthful. It is the exclusive blending of these two great safe cleaners that gives Fels-Naptha its double cleansing value. Get Fels-Naptha at your grocer's today, and treat your clothes to Fels-Naptha Cleanliness!



You can tell Fels-Naptha by its clean naptha odor.



Stockings know they give Fels-Naptha a real test. Yet all the dirt, perspiration and odors are completely taken away, and every thread is clean.



The original and genuine naptha soap, in the red-and-green wrapper. Buy it in the convenient ten-bar carton.

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Philadelphia

PROVE the quick, safe, and thorough work of Fels-Naptha. Send 2c in stamps for sample bar. Address Fels-Naptha Soap, Philadelphia

FELS-NAPTHA

THE GOLDEN BAR WITH THE CLEAN NAPTHA ODOR

The Broken Man

(Continued from page 64)

weakness had given a semblance of strength to this shell of a man. But it was gone now, and the full measure of its tragedy struck like a charge of lead to Peter's heart.

Mona, feeling Peter's grief and guessing swiftly the thought that had sent his wordless lips white and trembling, said to comfort him: "He hasn't been this way long, Peter. It was the swamp. He told me the police were after him, and he hid himself there. The heat—bad water—"

She tried futilely to explain away the horror of the thing—to make Peter believe this wreck of a man was not the product of months and years of hardship and suffering, but had reached his condition because of a passing torment that had covered only a few days in the swamp. But she knew she was failing, and she stopped before she had finished, with her head bowed before Peter's eyes. She heard his tense lips whisper "the police" as if the words choked him as they came out, and then he went down again to the edge of the pool for water. She wet her handkerchief when he returned and held it over Donald's eyes, and Peter unlaced the worn-out, muddy boots—and suddenly a sound came from him, a little cry of unutterable understanding as his hand found in the trampled grass the half eaten carrot which his father had dropped.

She had never seen Peter's face so white, and never before had she seen a look in his blue eyes so unlike the Peter she had grown up with, and played with, and loved.

"He is breathing easier," she said. "It was the excitement, the shock—"

He nodded, and replied in a dead, even voice, "I know what it was, Ange. I know." He took one of his father's hands and held it between his own, looking at the face in Mona's arms into which life was beginning to return and breath to come more evenly. "It has been a long time, dad. Five years—five years like those three days when the police were hunting us in the forest, and you caught rabbits for me to eat. But it is ended now."

Mona's heart throbbed. "We will keep him with us, Peter—always! We will hide him—somewhere—never let him go away again! Oh, it will be easy for us to do that, and Father Albanel—and Simon—will help us—"

A deeper breath trembled on Donald McRae's lips, but it was not that breath, or the faint moan that came with it, that stopped her before she had finished. Peter was looking over her head at something beyond her. He dropped his father's hand, and what she saw in his face drew a gasping cry from her even before she knew its cause.

She turned and looked. And then, in an instant, she was on her feet with Peter.

So quietly that no sound of footfall or breaking twig had given warning of his approach, a man had stolen upon them. He stood not a dozen feet away, dressed in the field service uniform of the Provincial Police. That was the first terrible fact which telegraphed itself to her brain; the man was an officer, he was after Donald McRae, and he had caught them! But this first alarm gave place to a greater shock as her eyes saw the face above the

uniform. It was a large, coarse face streaming with sweat; the lips were heavy, the nose big, and the eyes were small and too close together for one who bulked so large. It was a face filled with triumph—an exultation which the man made dramatically poignant as he stood with his heavy hands on his hips, looking from one to the other with a smile that was deadly in its promise twisting the corners of his mouth.

He did not speak, did not even move, but waited while his presence crushed like a weight of horror upon the two who were staring at him. His eyes rested on Mona, and the wicked gleam in them—the thought which they could not hide, merciless, sure, almost gloating—drew his name from her lips in a cry that was filled with fear, with half disbelief, with a note that almost called for pity.

"Aleck—Curry!"

The man's heavy head nodded, but he did not speak. It was still too great a moment of triumph to be broken by voice. He looked at Peter, and then, slowly, significantly, at the unconscious form of Peter's father. God could not have given him a greater hour than this! For if it had not been for that man and for Peter he might have had the girl. It was Peter who had come in his way from that first day when they had fought over Mona in the edge of the clearing; it was Peter who had whipped him, Peter whom he had grown to hate above all other things on earth, and it was Peter's heart and soul and happiness, almost his very life, that he now held in the hollow of his hand!

And he would make Peter pay.

"Yes, it is ended now," he said, repeating Peter's words of a few moments before. "And I'm rather glad. The swamp was hot and filled with mosquitoes."

Something clinked as he fumbled at his belt and the sound sent a chill of horror through Mona. He held out the manacle irons so that she could see them.

"I've got to do it," he said, a mocking apology in his voice. "Distasteful, but necessary." He faced Peter. "Your father knew we were close behind him, and it won't do him any good to play dead. He's slippery, and I'm going to put these on him. I guess"—he swung his heavy head toward Mona again—"I guess Father Albanel and old Simon can't help him very much from now on. It was nice of you to think of it, though, Mona. You were always so tender-hearted—when it came to Peter!"

He was still the old bully and his voice trembled with the suppression of his triumph. This was his master stroke. It was not capture of the man whom the law would condemn to hang that thrilled him most; it was the twisted beauty in Mona's face, the shock and terror in her eyes, and the helplessness and despair he saw in Peter's. He did not hurry, did not call for an instant upon the dignity of the law, but twisted the knife of his vengeance slowly.

When Mona's eyes turned from him to Peter her heart stood still. He was gray. There was no blood in his lips. He was looking down upon the still, upturned face of his father, and his hands were clenched. When he raised his head she saw that his

eyes were no longer Peter's eyes. He advanced slowly toward Aleck Curry, and the manacles rattled as Aleck dropped them to his belt and shifted a hand to his pistol holster.

Peter did not hear the click of steel or sense the menace of the shifting hand. One thought pounded maddeningly in his brain; his father had come back to him, he was home, and in the first hour of his return this beast had come into their lives again to break down every hope and prayer they had built up during the years. In Aleck Curry he saw not only that merciless law which had run his father like a rat from hole to hole, but a monster of vicious hate, a lustful, bullying boy grown into a still more vicious giant—and Peter's desire was to kill him.

Mona saw the deadly intent in his slow advance even as Aleck Curry saw it. She saw more—the hand on the pistol, the tightening fingers, the dangerous gleam that flashed in Aleck's eyes—and Peter with only his naked hands! A cry of warning came to her lips—of a terror which robbed her of the power to move. The cry ended in a scream, for as Peter leaped in, Aleck raised the pistol and fired. A terrible sickness came over her, a sickness which for an instant swept away her strength.

Peter felt the hot breath of the pistol in his face and the explosion was so near it fell like a blow against his eardrums. It was not a shot intended only to frighten him, for death had missed him by less than the width of his hand. Aleck released the trigger of his automatic and crooked his finger again, but even quicker than that movement was Peter, who flung himself with all his weight under his enemy's arm as the second shot was fired. He did not strike, but with both hands clutched Aleck's wrist, and at the same time tripped his foe so that they went to the earth together, with Aleck on his back.

In this instant there came upon Peter a crushing realization of the almost deadly odds against him. Into every nerve of his body flashed the truth—that he was fighting a man who wanted to kill him, who in reality had the right to kill him, and whom the law would not only vindicate but would commend for killing him. He was an outlaw, fighting against the almighty omniscience of that law, and what the world would regard as justice. And his survival now, like that of his father, depended upon beating it. He must break his enemy's wrist. Get the gun. Kill or be killed.

Every ounce of his strength he exerted upon the wrist as Aleck flung his free arm in a powerful and throttling embrace about his neck. He drew the wrist in, twisted it, and tried with a sudden effort to give it the final breaking snap, but it was like a piece of steel that would not break. The thick fingers did not loosen their hold on the pistol, and in spite of his desperate effort Peter's staring eyes saw the black muzzle of the weapon forcing itself a fraction of an inch at a time toward his body.

Now, when it was too late, he knew that in this close embrace he was not a match for Aleck. His quickness and his tirelessness counted for nothing. Aleck, slow, heavy, with not a quarter of his endurance,



A girl's skin can be a constant humiliation to her—or it can be one of the loveliest things about her, so fresh and sweet that no one can see it and not admire it.

If you want to be attractive to other people—begin with your skin! Overcome its defects—learn to care for it in the way that will keep

it flawlessly clear and smooth, with a fresh, natural color. The satisfaction you will feel in having a beautiful complexion will more than repay you for the few minutes of regular care that you spend on it every day.

Your skin can be as lovely as any woman's —if you give it the right care

DON'T be a fatalist about your skin!

Don't say to yourself that you have a naturally poor complexion, just as some women have a naturally good complexion.

A poor complexion is never natural to anyone.

If there is something about your skin that keeps it from being attractive—if it is pale and sallow, or excessively oily, or disfigured with blackheads—with blemishes—then you can be sure that you are not giving your skin the right kind of care.

Begin now to overcome this condition! You can make your skin what you will, for each day it is changing; old skin dies and new takes its place. Give this *new skin* the special treatment it should

have, and see how smooth and lovely you can keep it—how quickly the defects in it will disappear.

Use the following treatment to free your skin from blemishes—

Just before retiring, wash your face with warm water and Woodbury's Facial Soap, finishing with a dash of cold water. Then dip the tips of your fingers in warm water and rub them on the cake of Woodbury's until they are covered with a heavy cream-like lather. Cover each blemish with a thick coat of this and leave it on for ten minutes. Then rinse very carefully, first with clear hot water, then with cold.

Special treatments for all the commoner skin troubles are given in the booklet, "*A Skin You Love to Touch*" which is wrapped around every cake of Woodbury's Facial Soap.

Get a cake of Woodbury's Facial Soap and begin to-night the right treatment for *your* skin! Within a week or ten days you will see a marked improvement.

A 25 cent cake of Woodbury's lasts a month or six weeks for regular use, including any of the special treatments. The same qualities that give Woodbury's its beneficial effect in overcoming common skin troubles make it ideal for regular toilet use. You can also get Woodbury's in convenient 3-cake boxes.

Three Woodbury skin preparations —guest size—for 10 cents

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Confidential to the Ladies

Don't overdo that "for him" gift

Stores are full of "gift-things for him" of which "he" lives in moral dread.

For to receive a gift involves an unwritten obligation to wear it, or carry it, or to otherwise use, display, or consume it, as the lawyers would say.

It is usually surprising, and often disappointing, to a woman to find out how few things the average matter-of-fact man really wants. But for some of those things

he has a good deal of affection, and moreover, he can use a lot of them.



In casting about for an example, some-how pipes and pipe tobacco come first to our mind. If we were a woman and we wanted to get right next to a man's heart, we would smuggle a

good pipe and some good pipe tobacco to him around December 25th.

Or, if he already has a pipe that he thinks was divinely intended for him, the tobacco alone makes a full-size gift.

Other advantages of good pipe tobacco as a Christmas present include the following:

You don't have to engage in any detective work to find out his size, favorite color, or other specifications. And it doesn't make any difference whether he "already has plenty" or not. Nor need you be concerned lest your gift be duplicated.

A man can smoke up a lot of tobacco between this Christmas and next; while the humid jar, in which we put up a pound of Edgeworth, keeps the tobacco in prime condition indefinitely. Edgeworth is a tobacco that practically every pipe-smoker likes; it's a safe choice.

The 16-ounce jar sells for \$1.65 at any tobacco store.

If your regular dealer hasn't enough glass jars to supply the Christmas trade, let us play Santa Claus for you. Send us \$1.65 for a jar, "his" name and address, and your personal greeting card. We'll do the rest.

We'll pack the glass jar in an appropriate Christmas box, enclose your card and send it in plenty of time to reach him before Christmas.

Address Larus & Brother Company, 61 South 21st Street, Richmond, Va.

To Retail Tobacco Merchants: If your jobber cannot supply you with Edgeworth, Larus & Brother Company will gladly send you prepaid by parcel post a one- or two-dozen carton of any size of Edgeworth Plug Slice or Ready-Rubbed for the same price you would pay the jobber.

but with the brute strength of three men in his coarse body, could crush the life out of him in close quarters. Yet in these first few thrilling instants Peter knew this thought was not in the other's mind. All of his enemy's great strength was being exerted in an effort to point the pistol at his body.

Those two or three minutes in which he knew he was fighting to save his life seemed like an eternity to Peter. He saw Aleck's face, twisted in a leering grin, its bloodshot eyes laughing at him, its thick mouth mocking him as the powerful arm and wrist broke down with a slow, torturing sureness all the force he was putting against it. The gun was already at right angles to his body, and suddenly Peter realized why Aleck Curry had not used the choking force of his other arm before this. He had waited for the right moment—and that moment had come. The arm tightened. It was like a half-ring of steel, crushing Peter's neck and twisting his head so that his widening eyes left the pistol and stared into the lower branches of the ash tree.

In that moment he saw Mona. She was staggering up from the edge of the pond with something in her hands which looked like a chunk of mud. Her face passed over him, desperately white, and then she had fallen on her knees and he could hear the beat, beat, beat of that something in her hands close to his ears. A terrible cry came from Aleck Curry, and the throttling arm about Peter's neck relaxed until he could turn his head again, and he saw Mona pounding his foe's pistol hand with the stone that had looked like a chunk of mud. He saw the hand reddened with blood, saw the thick fingers loosen their grip on the pistol, and then swift as a flash Mona had snatched the big automatic and was backing away with it in her hand.

With a mighty upward heave of his body Peter freed himself, and with that movement came a wild cry out of him, a joyous approval of what Mona had done. Aleck lunged after him. They came to their feet. Peter's fist shot out to the other's jaw, and as Aleck staggered backward, almost falling under the force of the blow, Peter turned to take the pistol from Mona. She was halfway to the pond, and even as he cried out in warning and dismay the weapon left her hand, circled through the air and disappeared with a splash in the water. At his cry she faced him and ran back and thrust the mud-covered rock in his hand. Then he saw the terror in her eyes—the agony of fear that had made her throw away the weapon that had almost taken his life.

He let the rock slip from his fingers and fall to the ground in spite of the exclamation of protest which came from her white lips. He did not see her stoop quickly and pick it up as he advanced to meet Aleck Curry. His foe was hunched forward, like a gorilla, his head lowered, his huge fists clenched, his face distorted by the shock of Peter's blow and a rage which gave him a terrible aspect. One of his hands was bleeding where the stone had crushed it.

Then he rushed in, his arms apart, his great hands reaching for the man he hated. With the quickness of a cat Peter met his attack, avoiding the arms and the huge hands, leaping in, striking and darting back. He drove blow after blow, and one of them, catching Aleck again on the jaw, had behind it all the weight and force of

his body. But even that scarcely more than rocked the brutish head on its thick neck. He advanced slowly and steadily, taking the blows as he moved like a juggernaut upon Peter, driving him an inch at a time toward the edge of the pool.

Suddenly Mona ran in from behind, and with both hands she raised her stone and beat it between Aleck's shoulders. She raised it again, trying to strike his neck or his head, when with a bellow Aleck flung himself around, his great arm flying out like a beam. The blow caught Mona with all its force and sent her in a crumpled heap to the earth. Not a cry came from her lips, but a yell of fury burst from Peter's. He rushed in, and a hurricane of blows smashed into Aleck's face, cutting his lips, blinding him and choking the breath in his throat. But in that blindness and pain his hands reached out and caught Peter as their feet sank in the mud at the edge of the pond. A cry of triumph came from his bleeding mouth. At last his moment had come.

As Peter felt himself dragged into the deadly embrace his mind worked swiftly. His one chance now lay in the depths of the pool, and unless he could get his enemy there he was lost. Thrusting up his hands, he clenched them in Aleck's hair and put all his weight in dragging the head downward. The movement had its effect, and a step was gained toward the edge of the muddy shelf that terminated abruptly in eight feet of water. Unconscious of the trap, Aleck bent himself forward, putting all the crushing strength of his arms in the grip about Peter's body, and as Peter flung the weight of his head and shoulders in the same direction their balance was upset and they plunged into the pond.

As they struck the water Peter drew a great breath into his lungs, and in the same moment his foe relaxed his grip and began to flounder wildly in an element in which, even in the days of their boyhood, he had never been at home. His face rose above the surface for an instant, and Mona saw it as she staggered to the edge of the pond. It was then a deadly weight attached itself to one of his kicking legs, and not until Peter had dragged his burden to the muddy bottom of the beaver stronghold did he release his hold. He shot up for air, and scarcely had Aleck's body struggled to the surface when he dove again, and a second time bore his victim under. This time he expelled most of the air from his lungs, and for a few seconds hung on like an anchor.

A third and a fourth time Aleck rose, fighting for his life, but the fifth time it was Peter who buoyed him up and brought him nearly unconscious to the shore. He noticed the livid mark made by Aleck's hand on Mona's forehead as she helped him drag the heavy body out of the water. In another half-minute he had the manacles intended for his father about Curry's wrists, and with his belt he securely lashed his prisoner's legs together. Then he faced Mona.

The same question was in their eyes. In Mona's it was a wordless terror. Peter looked at his father. He was stirring. A hand rose weakly from the grass. He had seen nothing of the struggle, heard nothing, and thought of him was first to leap into Peter's mind.

"Thank Heaven he doesn't know what has happened!" he panted. "We must get

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Dinner Knife
Set of Six
\$10.50



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\$3.00



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That baby whose first smile was directly into your eyes, that toddler who took his first steps with his little hand gripped round your fingers, is he growing away from you?

It is natural that he should outgrow his first complete reliance on your care and love. More and more he is weighing, judging, making his own conclusions. Each careless rebuff to his natural and spontaneous spirit of investigation cautions him to build a wall of reserve against ridicule. Each misunderstanding of his dreams, his schemes and his enthusiasms builds the wall higher and thicker.

Between the ages of 10 and 20, what boys most need is association with fellows and men of strong character. They need to work with them and play with them, seeing the real world as it is, meeting experiences and boy-adventures with them, learning the right way to think and the right way to act.

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Name.....

Address.....

him away, Mona. If anything would kill him now it would be knowledge of this—that the law has found him—and that I—in helping him—have become an outlaw.”

She came to him quickly and put her hands to his face, just as she had done on that other day years ago when he had fought his great battle with Aleck. “They can’t blame you alone, Peter. I helped.” She held up her lips, but instead of kissing them he pressed his own to the reddening mark on her forehead. “There is the little cabin,” she whispered. “We can take your father there. And—I love you, Peter!”

She stood back from him, her eyes shining with sudden inspiration.

“Peter, will the law—will anybody—accept his story as truth against mine?” she asked. “They all know him at Five Fingers. They know he was always a beast and a bully and hated you—and fought you a number of times because of me. That last day he was at Five Fingers and found me alone in the woods, and you came just in time to save me from his insults—he threatened to kill you. Father Albnel was with you and heard it. And I’ll lie. I will tell them he found me here alone, and you came when he didn’t expect you, and there was a fight. God tells me it is right to say that—and swear to it if necessary!”

She turned from him and ran to Donald. Aleck Curry had coughed the water out of his lungs and was twisting in his bonds. His voice called loudly as Peter bent over his father. Donald’s eyes were opening.

“We must hurry!” urged Mona. “We must get him away—where he is safe—where he cannot be found!”

Peter raised his father in his arms. The weight of the emaciated body sent a stab of pain through him. It was as if he had picked up the limp form of a boy.

Mona, close at his side, smiled into the grief-filled eyes he turned toward her. Together they hurried across the meadow. And then Mona ran on ahead, following a scarcely worn path through deep timber until in a few moments she came to another little meadow, and here, under a clump of hardwoods, was a tiny cabin of logs—the “playhouse” Peter had built for her two winters ago as a refuge and rest place for her when she came to visit her beaver pets. Inside a screened porch was a couch of saplings, and on this she had spread blankets and cushions when Peter arrived.

Peter again proves himself “A Gentleman of Courage”—and Mona a woman of courage—in James Oliver Curwood’s January story—one of the most dramatic North Woods stories ever written

Things As They Are

(Continued from page 55)

own machine and hurried away as fast as he could. A man has only so many moments of iron resolution and he must use them when they come lest they disappear forever.

Rose regarded him quizzically when he came in. Perhaps the stress of his emotions printed things on his face.

“Tired, dear?” Her voice was strangely gentle. Sometimes she was querulous.

“No, sweetheart. What do you want?”

“What do I want? H’m. I wonder how many times I have heard you ask that question. And you have always granted my requests as generously as if you were a fairy prince. Why?”

Jim winced at her expression of

Donald’s eyes were wide open, and he was smiling up wanly at Peter. “Never thought the day would come when you’d be lugging your dad around like this, did you, Peter?” he asked, and tried to laugh. But the moment his head touched the soft cushions his eyes closed again. Peter drew Mona away. “There is a boat down on the shore of the lake,” he said, his voice steady again. “I’m going to force Aleck Curry into it and take him out to that little rock island two miles from the mainland. No one ever goes near it, and we can keep him there a prisoner until dad gets well, and then——” An angry yell came from the beaver pond. “Aleck is getting nervous,” he finished. “You stay with dad, Mona. Tell him I’ve gone to Five Fingers for things he needs. I’ll come back that way, and get here before dark. Good-by, Ange!”

He kissed her. For a moment Mona clung to his hand. “When you are down by the big stub—and if everything is all right—send me back the call.”

She watched him until he disappeared. Then she sat down close beside Donald McRae and held one of his limp hands. After what seemed to be a long time there came back to her clearly Peter’s signal-cry telling her that all was well, and that he was on his way to the prison island with Aleck Curry.

Over the forest fell a deep and quieting silence. Never had it seemed so intense to Mona, as she sat with Donald McRae’s hand held closely in her own. The man’s fingers were intertwined with hers as if he was afraid she would leave him; and his breath, coming more evenly and yet as faintly as the breath of a child, told her that complete exhaustion had at last overcome him with a sleep almost like death.

Twilight dusk began to fill the aisles of the woods, and with this dusk the last red glow died out of the west, and with it came the hour Mona loved more than all others—when darkness began to close in a velvety mantle over the world. The stillness, the soft whisperings of the forest and the peace that always came with night gave her courage and strengthened her faith. And at last, from beyond the beaver pond, she heard again Peter’s cry. He was returning. And as if he, too, had heard that cry, Donald McRae stirred softly and whispered Peter’s name.

gratitude. “It’s because I love you, honey,” he finally replied.

“Is there anything you wouldn’t do for me, Jim?” she persuaded.

“Nothing that I can think of.”

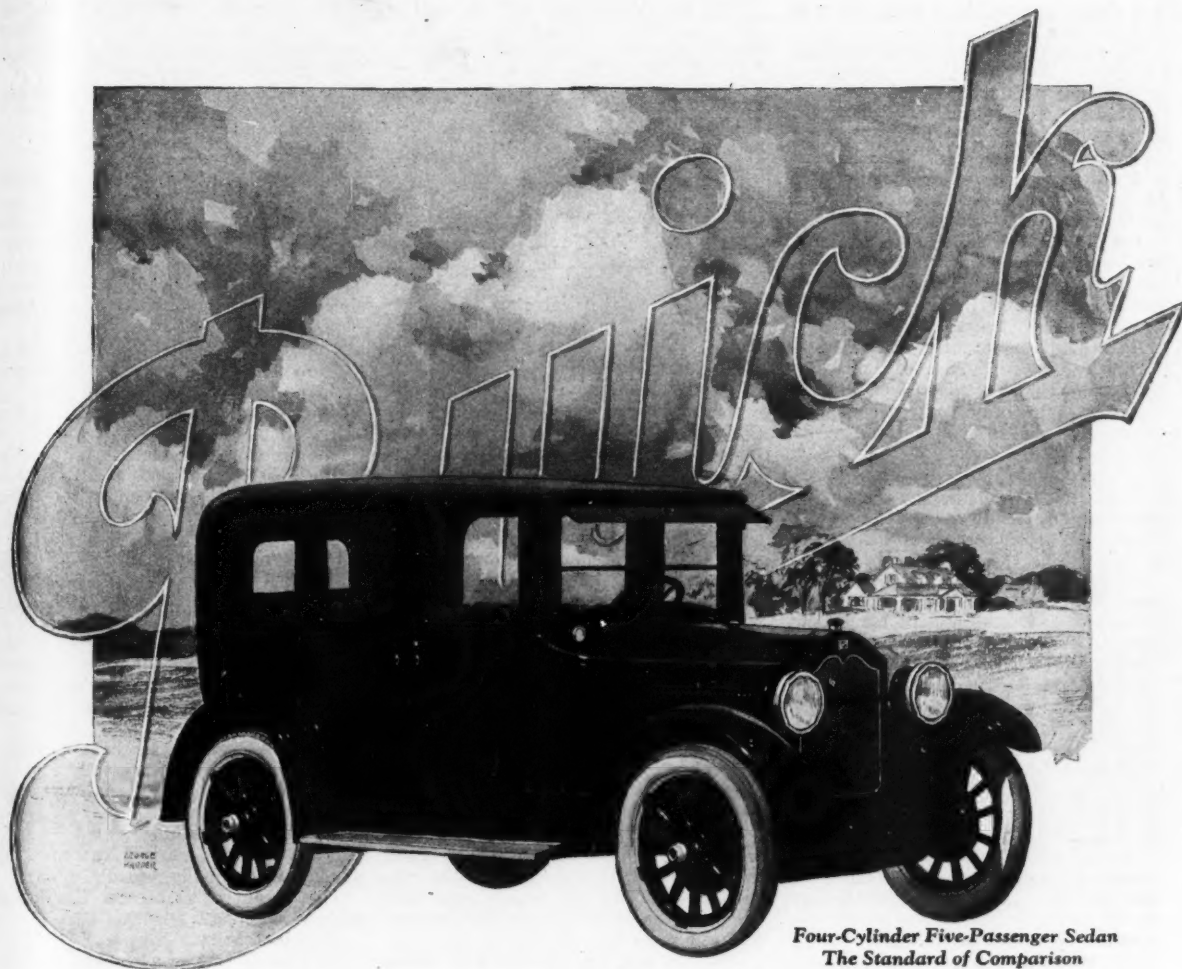
“Would you give me my freedom?”

“Your freedom? From what?” he asked, startled.

“From you. A divorce.”

He tried to keep a glint of excitement from showing in his eyes, excitement tempered with dismay at this upheaval in his existence. If what you are used to is only a mud puddle you fear to change for fear you’ll get into something worse.

“You’re crazy, Rose.” He kept his voice quite unstartled and soothed her as he



Four-Cylinder Five-Passenger Sedan
The Standard of Comparison

NEW in every particular, yet strictly Buick in character, the 1924 Buick four-cylinder, five-passenger Sedan fully exemplifies Buick's policy of building greater satisfaction into its cars with each succeeding year. Moderately priced, everything that could be asked for is present—fine appearance, comfort, power. Its new Fisher body, new frame, fenders and radiator—its powerful Buick valve-in-head motor—its sturdy, four-wheel brakes, all contribute to that greater measure of utility that the world has come to expect from Buick.

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Five Passenger Touring	\$1295
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had always done. "What could you want of a divorce?"

She stammered a little as she answered, "Haven't you noticed how things are between me and the doctor?"

"Rose!" Indignation struggled with disbelief in his tones.

"It's quite true and I'd like to be free and with him. He is sure that if I were his wife he could effect a cure. Oh, Jim dear, will it break your heart?"

Jim did not answer. He did not know yet how to answer. Fortunately, she did not seem to expect a reply, took it for granted apparently that her wish would be accomplished just as every other wish of hers had been granted, and went on to prattle almost gaily of the plans for the new life that was going to be hers.

The twilight came and she was still talking, her hand so small and helpless and trembling a little stroking the back of his. Finally she almost pushed him away.

"The doctor will be here in a few minutes, Jim, and if you could find anything to do somewhere else I'd like to see him alone."

It was a relief to Jim to get out of the house. Strangely enough he always felt that way—as if he had been temporarily relieved of a staggering love burden. Tonight it was especially so.

Outside the house his puzzlement gave way to a strange new feeling of lightness, almost of elation. Life was giving him a chance at happiness. Thank God!

He was off and away in his car before he had time to give his problems due consideration. Who could stop to think about the future when one could drive a few blocks and take it into one's clasp?

Besides it wasn't fair to Doris not to tell her right away. That and instinct led him directly to her home. He had never called there for her openly before.

But now it didn't matter what people might think. In a short time he would claim her glory for his own before all the world. He did a little dance step all by himself on the old-fashioned carriage block which still persisted in front of her house in spite of the automobiles and airplanes.

He circled the gravelly walk to the front door, he drew gently at the bell pull, twice. It was his ring. She would answer the door herself.

There were soft footfalls inside, approaching the door. His heart kept time to their fairy cadence.

The door opened.

INTERLUDE

The story is complete. It ends with the imagination painting two soft eager arms, reaching out to draw him into the friendly shelter of the doorway, two eyes that have just changed to gladness from a haunting fear that she would never see him again—ever.

But that picture is only imagination. The story says merely: "The door opened." Read on.

"Why where is Doris?" he asked.

Her mother peered out at him. It was almost dark by now and the old-fashioned house did not have an electric porch light.

"It's Mr. Vaine, isn't it?" she said at last. "Doris hasn't come home yet. We're worried about her because she's never late. Did you wish to leave any word for her?"

"N-n-no," he decided. "I'd have to see her personally, I guess."

He thought he knew where to find her. She would be sitting just where he had left her, contemplating the place of their stolen past happiness. In the future it would not need to be stolen.

He drove miles through the darkness before he noticed that his headlights were not turned on. What did he need of illumination on the path that led to her? He was almost there when he threw the switch.

His brakes, both of them, howled as he jammed them on.

Doris's car, wrecked, was standing in the old lumber trail broken in two by a falling tree but with the engine in the forward half still threshing away cheerfully.

She was pinned down by the heavy trunk across her legs, mercifully unconscious.

He worked feverishly with a jack and improvised levers until he could drag her out.

She did not regain consciousness until he was carrying her into her home. She stirred in his arms and raised her hand to touch his cheek.

"Jim dear," she whispered. Apparently she knew who it was without opening her eyes. "I was crying so hard that I couldn't see." That was all she said. He understood the rest.

The surgeon who examined her thought she would live but feared she could never walk again.

Jim roamed the streets in a daze. It seemed impossible that anything so full of life as Doris could be swiftly crushed into shapelessness, that *joie de vivre* could suddenly become pain. He rebelled the more for her because she was so little used to it.

Habit at length guided his steps home. He was exhausted physically and emotionally and there was no place else to go.

"Thank God, you have come," said the doctor as Jim entered the sick room. A screen was around the bed. "I've been trying to get you by telephone all over town."

"Why?" Jim demanded. "What's the matter? Is Rose worse or—"

"She's gone," the physician completed.

Jim did not need to ask what he meant. There was only one way Rose could leave.

"What happened?"

"I don't know. I got here about an hour or so ago and found her very feeble. I think I might have revived her but she did not seem to care to make a fight for it. I did my best but there was no use. You'll pardon me for asking but has there been some great emotional strain on her this afternoon—some shock?"

Jim looked the doctor over. "You should know better than I. She asked me to leave the house so that you and she might plan your future lives together."

"She and I? Man, you're crazy."

"Didn't you tell her you could cure her if she were to leave me and become your wife?"

"Absurd. She had no chance of getting well. I've always told her that. Besides, I'm married."

Jim covered his face with his hands. To think that his usually watchful eye had failed to detect his wife's pitiful subterfuge to find out if he wanted to be free!

He tried to say something but could not. What could he ever say to anyone? Finally the tears came.

A year had elapsed, an intensely difficult year for Jim Vaine. Emotionally he was rather numb; he had the feeling that the life he was living did not belong to him, that it had been forfeited and that every day that he took from the treasury was a stolen day that would have to be replaced sometime.

The first time that he had seen Doris, which was several months after her injury, he found her sitting by the window in a wheel-chair. The shock of it turned him sick white.

She was a very different Doris, too. She was still lovely but with a loveliness of spirit some way. All her bodily charm had been translated into terms of the soul.

He could not get used to the wheel-chair. Its existence struck him dumb, stood like a specter directly in the path of life. He had to force himself to call on her frequently because he knew that she depended upon him. Otherwise he would have run blindly as far from her as possible.

Finally, the year being gone, he asked her to marry him.

She had been waiting for that apparently, for her eyes were very wistfully eager as she searched his face for something she did not seem to find.

She shook her head.

"No, Jim, not until I can use this wheel-chair for kindling wood."

That meant never because the doctors held out no hope.

They both knew.

"But Doris dear, I love you and nothing else makes any difference."

She smiled a twisted, reminiscent smile. "My dear Jim, I hope you will never love anyone else quite as you loved me once. That's because I am selfish. But"—she stopped to bite her lip to steady it—"there isn't enough of me to go on with the story. Come to see me sometimes when you can but not soon right now. You make me s-s-sorry for myself."

"I'll never love anyone else," he said in reply to her first proposition.

He kissed her sweet, warm little hand and then, reverently, her mouth.

She managed to keep her lips steady during that ordeal and even until after, while he stood at the door, she had whispered "Good-by."

Jim found the street blindly. The sun was very bright. It was strange that he hadn't noticed that when he went in.

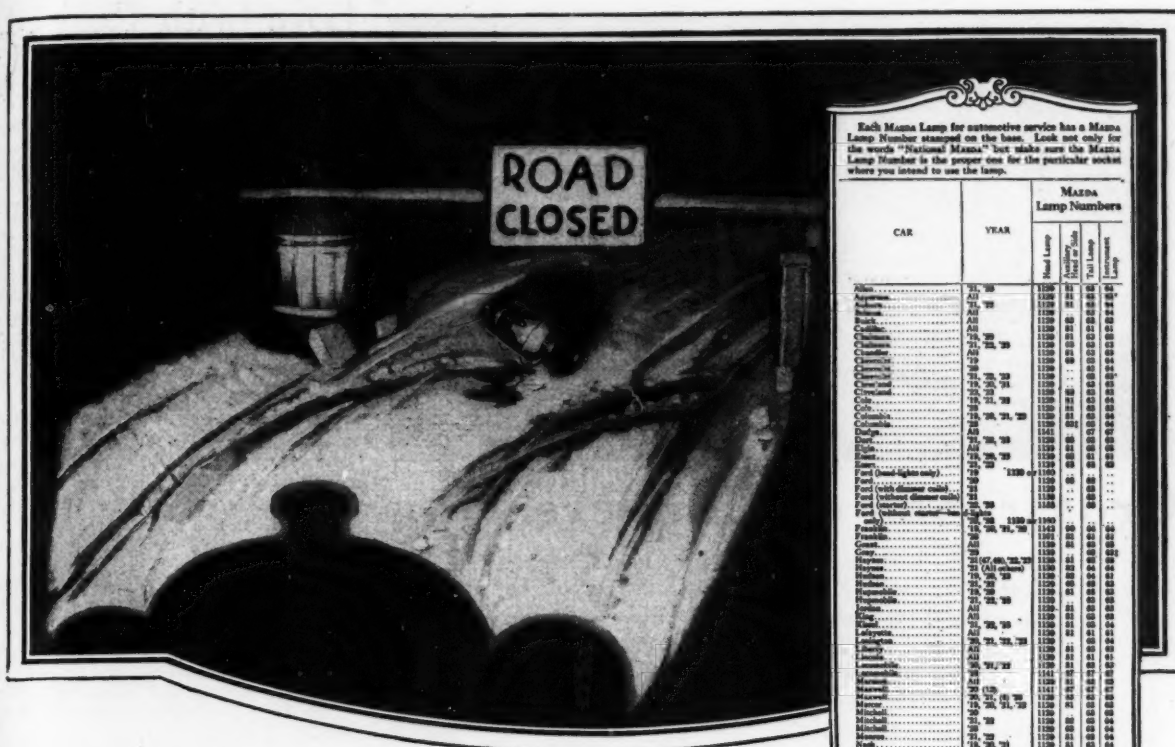
ADDENDA

THE tale is finished again.

And yet you know as well as Jim Vaine that it is a serial story and that tomorrow will bring—what? A business success that will make him forget the pain of the lost romance? An accident that will let him die still a hero to himself? Another woman?

Other women?

Anyone who tries to stop a toboggan once it gets started is in for an accident—and it's the same with love—which is the theme of Frank R. Adams's story in January COSMOPOLITAN



Your Lamps Say "Danger!"

Yesterday, when you passed, there was no danger. But tonight the road is closed—and the warning lantern is down. What if your lamps had failed to tell you in time?

Do you buy lamps carefully? Do you know at all times that your lamps are dependable? Do you insist on seeing the words "National MAZDA" clearly stamped on the base before you accept the lamp, to be sure it has the same quality as the National MAZDA lamps you use in your home?

When you need new auto lamps go to the National MAZDA lamp dealer. He sells the same lamps that are standard original equipment for 80% of all cars. There is a particular lamp for each socket. Look for the name. Verify the number on the base.

NATIONAL MAZDA LAMPS

for Automobiles

Each Mazda Lamp for automotive service has a Mazda Lamp Number stamped on the base. Look not only for the words "National Mazda" but make sure the Mazda Lamp Number is the proper one for the particular socket where you intend to use the lamp.

CAR	YEAR	MAZDA Lamp Numbers		
		Head Lamp	Side Lamp	Tail Lamp
Alfa	'11, '12	1200	81	82
Alfa	'13	1200	81	82
Alfa	'14	1200	81	82
Alfa	'15	1200	81	82
Alfa	'16	1200	81	82
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Alfa	'84	1200	81	82
Alfa	'85	1200	81	82
Alfa	'86	1200	81	82
Alfa	'87	1200	81	82
Alfa	'88	1200	81	82
Alfa	'89	1200	81	82
Alfa	'90	1200	81	82
Alfa	'91	1200	81	82
Alfa	'92	1200	81	82
Alfa	'93	1200	81	82
Alfa	'94	1200	81	82
Alfa	'95	1200	81	82
Alfa	'96	1200	81	82
Alfa	'97	1200	81	82
Alfa	'98	1200	81	82
Alfa	'99	1200	81	82
Alfa	'00	1200	81	82

*All are closed '11 and '12 models. *On closed cars only. *On closed cars only.





Crossroads of Conversation

Could the telephone directory in the hands of each subscriber be revised from hour to hour, there would be no need for the information operator. But even during its printing and binding, thousands of changes take place in the telephone community. New subscribers are added to the list. Old ones move their places of business or of residence.

Though their names are not listed on the directory, these subscribers must be connected by the highways of speech with all others in the community. To supplement the printed page, there must be guides at the crossroads of conversation.

Such are the information operators, selected for their task because of quickness and accuracy, courtesy and intelligence. At their desks, connected with the switchboards in central offices, they relieve the regular operators from answering thousands of questions about telephone numbers that would otherwise impede the rendering of service. If they are unnecessarily asked for numbers already in the directory, service is retarded.

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The Home Correspondence School
Established 1897
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Love (with Revised Rules)

(Continued from page 73)

This floored Peg's father. And his sense of values had suffered assault. He was literally stunned. "I am afraid it is too big for me," he admitted stiffly.

And he turned and left the room. Indeed, his retreat was so precipitate that he all but collided with another young man, who, entering unannounced, had just insouciantly scaled a soft hat toward a chair in the reception hall. The newcomer was Tommy Lane. He was forever popping in this way and a glimpse of him was as much a part of Peg's routine as brushing her teeth or going to the office every morning.

Long acquaintance had denied them the romance that youth is supposed to crave. They had come to maturity with nothing in common save the memory of a thousand sexless escapades and almost as many bitter quarrels. The relation was like that of brother and sister. They both felt free to speak their minds—and they did!

"I beg your pardon," Tommy apologized to Peg's father, though the fault was not his. "Peg home?"

"She's in the living room," replied Peg's father without pausing—he felt the need of solitude and the salve of silence for a time.

"My Aunt Maria's maiden cat!" apostrophized Tommy. "What's hit him? I wonder if he's been having a touse with Peg!" From the living room came Shane's voice. Tommy pricked up his ears. "Sounds like some new bird! Let's go."

To those who did not know Tommy, this might suggest that he, believing two is company and three is not, had decided to withdraw. But Tommy had no such compunction. He was young, aggressive and, in his way, as arrogant and egotistic as Shane. Youth, when it is normal, is never otherwise.

"Hello," he announced affably, presenting himself at the door of the living room.

"Hush!" commanded Peg sternly, and turned her face back to Shane.

Tommy hushed. And Shane, ignoring the new arrival altogether, took a deep breath and let his voice fill the living room.

"Come to, come to

Pardon the part.

Apart

A part of this is this

Do you wish for he wishes for do you wish for him—"

Tommy also took a deep breath. But he said nothing. He shot a glance at Peg. She was conscious of this but refused to meet his eyes. She sat there looking as Hebe may have when Apollo played for the gods.

"Is she kidding herself, or just trying to kid him?" thought Tommy.

Now Tommy had been out and about, the world for to see. He had had the advantages, educational and otherwise, of four years at Princeton, bisected by a trip to France. And since his graduation he had been in business with his father. The latter—Thomas Lane, Senior, Real Estate and Mortgages—had scrimped to put Tommy through college and, when that interlude was over, had given him a start in the world by taking him into his office.

At least that was the way Tommy's father looked at it. Tommy saw it from



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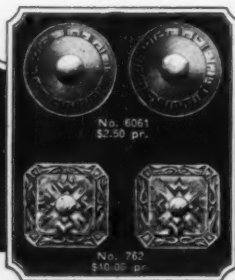
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another angle. He believed that the methods still in vogue in his father's office antedated Tutankhamen's Tomb. It was his belief that his father's business needed "pep," and he worked to deliver the goods. Consequently he, who should have comforted his paternal parent's declining years, became a perpetual thorn in his side.

Also, the business that had run so smoothly all these years began to creak and groan. Growing pains, though. It had moved into larger quarters and was branching out in all directions.

That was Tommy. Young, receptive and ever so modern. Yet he was almost as dazed as Peg's father had been. He had never in all his life heard the equal of the stuff Shane got off, but, being young, strong and; in his own cheerful phrase, a glutton for punishment, he stuck it out to the end.

"You know and I know, I know and you know, you know and I know, we know and they know, they know and we know, they know and I know, they know and they know, you know and you know, I know and I know."

"Which," Tommy assured himself as Shane came to a full stop, "seems to make it unanimous."

Nevertheless, he behaved splendidly. "Marvelous!" he assured Shane when they had been introduced. "Almost unprecedented, I should say."

"You probably won't understand it at first," interjected Peg quickly—she was afraid to let Tommy have the floor.

"Of course not," he acquiesced blandly. "Limited intelligence and all that. But give me time. If you don't mind I'll go outside and think it over."

The April night was soft and sweet, with the ghost of the old moon in the new moon's slim sickle. Tommy filled his lungs and addressed the night.

"Come to, come to,
Give me air, give me air,
How do they get that way. Pardon the question, question the pardon, how do they get that way I say?
I know they know you know I know they get that way because they are born that way."

This flight of inspiration pleased him; he grinned. "I can do it too," he assured himself. "Never suspected before that I was a poet. I'll have to ask Peg if there's any money in it."

The opportunity was offered him that same night, for Peg sent Shane away early. She was in the kitchen drinking a glass of milk when Tommy, returning from the walk the April night had beguiled him into, saw the light and crossing over vaulted in through an open window.

"Tommy Lane!" she cried. "You startled the life out of me. I thought you were a burglar!"

"Thanking you for your kind invitation, I'll come in," retorted Tommy, unperturbed. "And speaking of burglars, who is the new yegg you're running around with?"

"Who invited you to help yourself?" evaded Peg as Tommy, seating himself on the table, poured a glass of milk and selected a large doughnut.

"The Lord helps them who help themselves," said he piously. "Never knew it to fail. Say, Peg, is he a real union poet? Does he make money at it?"

"Money," said Peg loftily, "isn't everything."

"Try that on a street car conductor the next time he asks you for your fare," suggested Tommy with a mouthful of doughnut. "He's a poetic looking duck, isn't he? It's his hair. If he had it cut close he'd probably look like somebody wanted for robbing chicken roosts or beating board bills. He might fool some girls, but not you, Peg!"

"You think you're——"

"Clever! False modesty alone would bid me deny it. Who's Gertrude Stein?"

"Why—she lives in Paris——"

"A fairly populous village, as I recall it. That doesn't make her a celebrity *per se*, as you highbrows put it."

"Anybody but a boob——"

"Like me. Blown in the glass. I admit it. I prefer musical comedy to an opera, a detective yarn to a Russian novel, and 'Little Miss Muffet Sat on a Tuffet' to Swinburne. But pity me. Tell me some more about Gertrude Stein."

"Everybody who is anybody says she is wonderful. One man says she gives words an oddly new, intimate flavor and—and at the same time makes familiar words seem like strangers."

"I'll say she does. I had a feeling tonight I had never been properly introduced to the English language. Does Lemoyne write the same sort of stuff?"

"Why—yes. But not in imitation——"

"Of course not. What else does he do?"

"He—he's a Sinn Feiner. He wants more than anything to go to Ireland and fight for freedom——"

"Or, more likely, practise pot-shooting at somebody from a bush. That lad is only a distant cousin of the Sinn Fein movement, three thousand miles removed!"

"I never heard of *your* being decorated for bravery," flashed Peg.

"I was awfully brave but nobody ever noticed it—just my luck!" replied Tommy equably. "I really should have had a war cross with two palms, to say nothing of a Congressional medal and a V. C.——"

"Tell that to Sally Ollivant," suggested Peg. "I understand that she hangs on your every word these days——"

"Seldom have I been more appreciated. That girl has brains. She——"

"Is a little cat, but you're too dense to see it," interrupted Peg, which was not nice of her. But Tommy had, at last, infuriated her.

"Well, she never used her claws on me, which is more than I can say of some people without becoming personal."

"How does it happen you aren't favoring her with your society tonight?"

"Oh, Sally is feminine! She's getting ready to sink the harpoon into me. Tonight she's entertaining my deadly rival. I'm supposed to be biting my finger nails in jealousy——"

"You think an awful lot of yourself, don't you? I suppose every man thinks every girl is crazy to marry him——"

"Well, if he doesn't act on that general principle, the next thing he knows some girl *has*!"

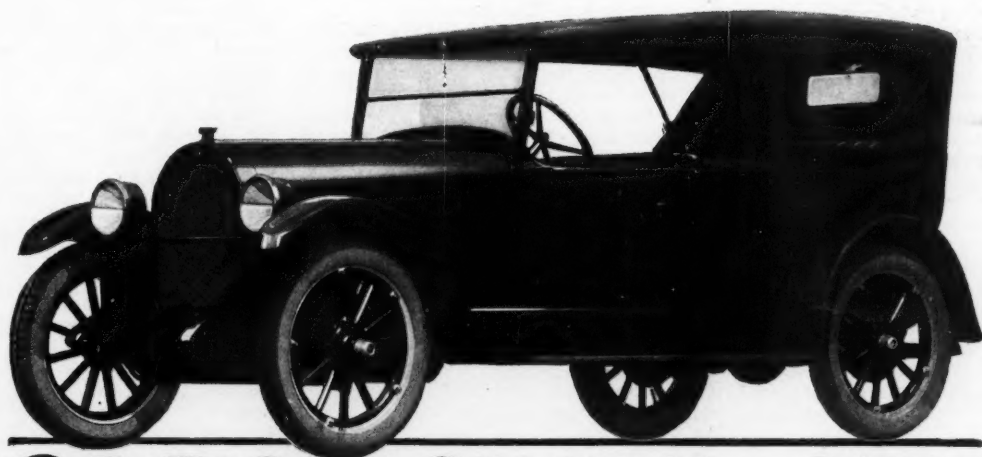
"I wish," said Peg with asperity, "that you'd go home. I'm tired."

"Of course you are. You've had a hard night of it. Fifteen minutes of that guy was all I could stand. Your father looked absolutely done up——"

He did not finish. Peg started for him

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and he dodged swiftly through the door. But his voice came back with a final jeer.

"You'll always remember this," he called, "as the year of the big wind."

Now that was the last thing he should have said. Opposition, as the Colgates knew, had ever been to Peg what a five-barred gate is to a pink-coated huntsman. On this occasion they took counsel together, and though, through the weeks that followed, Shane became Peg's shadow and it seemed to them that he was wearing her to a shadow, they said not a word.

But Tommy! A devilish ingenuity seemed to possess him. It seemed as if he were determined to egg Peg on. He became Shane's ally, serving him even better than he could have served himself. For he forced Peg to defend him continually, and one cannot defend a person without assuming responsibility for him.

"Genius," she assured Tommy loftily, "is always misunderstood."

"Genius," retorted Tommy, "has nothing on me. I'm always misunderstood. I think that, with the possible exception of Sally Ollivant, nobody—"

"I hope," flashed Peg, "you marry her. The sooner the better!"

The heat with which she spoke was astonishing. But Tommy never batted an eyelash. "A thousand thanks for your warm wishes," said he. "I hasten to return them in kind. Lemoine's a combination of Sir Galahad and all the Knights of the Round Table, with the genius of Keats and the versatility of Shakespeare added for good measure. As your friend and well-wisher, I advise you to snap him up. He's a bargain at any price."

"Don't be ridiculous! I don't see why, just because a man and a girl happen to be good friends, they must get married—"

"Neither do I—you'd think they would prefer to remain good friends. But the first thing you know, it seems to happen. And I believe in preparedness, Peg. I've got your wedding present all picked out."

"What is it?" demanded she, unwisely. "A pair of ear muffs. You'll thank me for my thoughtfulness many times before you reach your golden anniversary. By the way, where does Lemoine live?"

"Why—I don't know," confessed Peg, surprising herself that this was true. But importunities and impetuosities took, with Shane, the place of information. "Why do you ask?"

"I just wondered if you knew," retorted Tommy smoothly. "If you're to be asked to share a garret, you ought to take a look at it first."

"He's never even mentioned marriage—"

"Don't be too sure. You can never tell what that bird is spouting about. He may have proposed several times already."

"It would be none of your business if he had!"

"There seems to be something about him that has had a bad effect on your gift of repartee. That's the sort of stuff you used to get off when you were six. With all your present advantages of association, you ought to be positively brilliant. What's happened to you?"

"Nothing. You simply make me sick!" "You look sick," he agreed.

And that was the truth. One cannot be a business woman eight hours a day and then strive to hold a tempestuous lover at arm's length without feeling the strain.

"I wish," she snapped, "that you'd devote yourself to Sally Ollivant and leave me in peace."

"No use spoiling her before marriage. She'd expect too much afterwards."

"Then you are going to marry her?" demanded Peg quickly.

"Time will tell. I've heard hints that marriage is a serious business and—"

There he paused. They were in the Colgate living room, patterned with the brilliant May sunlight. It was Sunday morning. Peg's father and mother had gone to church. The house was very still. But now the calm was broken by the whirr of a motor which, coming into sight, stopped in front of the Colgate house. Shutting off the engine, Shane sprang out.

"A man for the ages appears!" commented Tommy. "Here's where I depart. Mind if I go out the back door? I try to be broad-minded, but some day I'll bite that lad."

Peg made no reply. She was tired, terribly so. She felt hot, queer. She wondered if she were about to be sick. She had never been sick in her life, not even with the familiar diseases of childhood. And yet—she rubbed her face thoughtfully. It seemed to hurt—

Shane burst into the room—he never merely entered. "Sheila!" he cried—he had so rechristened her, without preface or permission. "I am going. I can stand it no longer. It's intolerable!"

"Stand what?" demanded Peg thickly—she was thrusting her tongue tentatively up toward the roof of her mouth and the effort caused her to wince.

"Is genius to be bound by ordinary rules made for pigmy men? Are my comings and goings to be challenged? Can love be made the handmaiden of the conventions? Am I to be bound, imprisoned, stifled?"

Peg looked up at him. It occurred to her that he seemed curiously large and wavery. She blinked her eyes to clear her vision.

"Sheila, answer me!" he implored. "Can you see me suffer so?"

"I don't feel very well myself," murmured Peg.

"Ah! You feel it too. An affinity of mind. When did this come on?"

"Just a little while ago, I think—"

Shane seized her hands. "That settles it. You are mine, created for me. Let the world say what it will, we two are one and eternal." And thereupon, for the first time, he kissed her.

"Oh!" protested Peg unsteadily. "You mustn't. You—"

"The house stifles me. Life stifles me," he rushed on, unheeding as usual. "Sheila! Say that you too are stifled!"

"It—it does seem hot here."

"I have a car," said he. "Let's go away. Far away!"

"Perhaps a ride will do me good."

In a normal moment she might have asked where he had managed to secure a car. But the question did not occur to her. It did to Tommy. He considered the license number and then, suddenly, became conscious of the fact that a bag and a suitcase were tucked in behind.

"Now what, Watson," he murmured, "do you make of that? He can't be beating his board bill. I wonder if he's been thrown out. By George! I'll bet—"

Leaving the thought unfinished, he turned toward his house. There he went

to the telephone and, getting a number, conversed briefly.

"I don't know what he's up to," he admitted as he hung up. "But he's got his nerve with him. *Whew!* I wouldn't be in his shoes for a million!"

The sound of a motor being started drew him hastily to the window. Shane was departing. And—good Lord! Peg was with him.

"Either she's crazier than I thought," gasped Tommy, "or he hit her over the head with one of those poems of his and stunned her!"

The Colgates returned from church a little after noon. They had expected to find Peg there, but the maid told them she had gone off with Mr. Lemoine. This did not please them, but they were not actually disturbed until Peg failed to return for the Sunday night supper.

Even so, they were utterly unprepared for the wire they received a little after seven. This had been sent from Connecticut and read: "Married this afternoon. Will write and explain everything. Love Peg."

Eventually they got Peg's mother to bed. The doctor who had been hastily summoned—Peg's father knew very little about hysterics, but he believed for a time they were going to prove fatal—gave her a sedative and presently the house relapsed into comparative calm. And so Peg's father, standing in the darkened living room and looking with unseeing eyes out into the May twilight, was able to put his thoughts in order. It was, he discovered, the last thing he wanted to do.

He was only forty-eight, but tonight he felt suddenly older than the everlasting hills. He had loved Peg with that father-love of which not enough has ever been said, but now he was not sure but what he hated her.

The headlights of a motor flashed across his eyes, but their vision was turned inward. He was not at once aware that a car had stopped at the curb.

"Is anybody up?" came Peg's voice—it sounded strange, stifled.

Peg's father stiffened. The idea that an angered father might turn an eloping daughter from his doors had always seemed to him preposterous. But now, as the bell sounded, he felt the impulse.

Yet as the bell rang a second time, more imperatively, he moved toward the front door. He opened it a little. Emotion suffocated him but his face was set impassively. Then, in a second, his expression changed.

"Tommy!" he gasped. "I've got Peg," said Tommy. "Hold the door open—I'll bring her in."

"Great Scott!" cried Peg's father. "What's happened?"

This Tommy ignored—he was already halfway back to the car. A moment later he returned with Peg in his arms.

"I've got the mumps," explained Peg from a cocoon of blankets as she saw her father's face, "so Tommy brought me home and—"

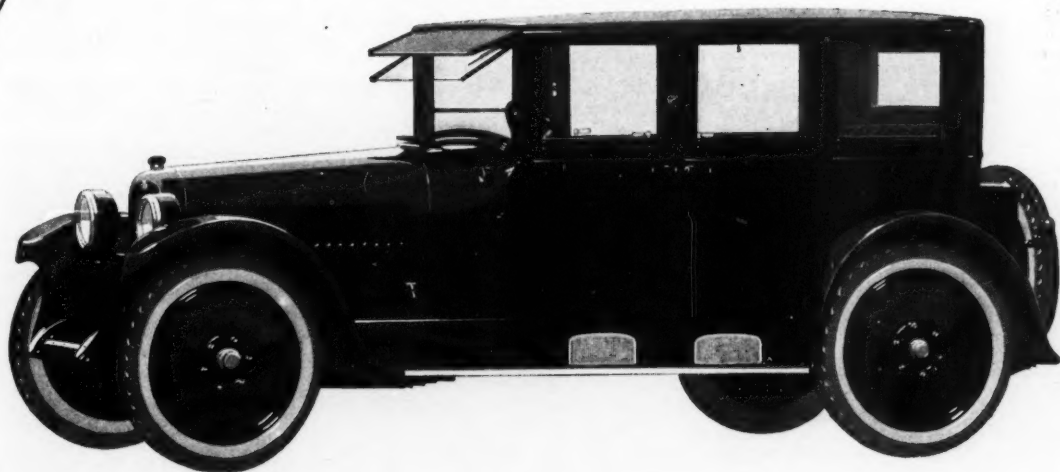
"You keep still," advised Tommy. To her father he added: "I'll take her up to her room. Call the doctor, please—I'll explain later."

The doctor came. Sometime later Tommy reappeared. Through all this time Peg's father had paced the hall, his thoughts awirl.

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Name

Present Position

Address

"It's the mumps, all right," said Tommy cheerfully. "Good thing I've had them—I hope Lemoyne hasn't. I thought the best thing to do was to bring—"

"Hang it, man!" exploded Peg's father.

"Where's Lemoyne?"

"Lemoyne? I don't know and I care less. As far as I'm concerned, he's lucky to be alive—"

He produced a cigarette and lighted it. "Whew! This has been one day. You see, I've had Lemoyne's number all along. When he and Peg departed this morning I had an idea the laugh might be on me, but I didn't dare take a chance with that bird—"

"Look here! I want to know—"

"Steady. I'm giving it to you as fast as I can. Anyway, I jumped into my old boat and started after them. I lost the trail once, but I managed to pick it up again. And finally I caught 'em—caught 'em cold!"

Either the recollection—or the cigarette he was consuming—filled Tommy with immense relish. "They were in Connecticut then. They had stopped for dinner at a little roadhouse. I strolled in. Lemoyne was spouting away, as usual. I crossed over and took a seat, looking as if I expected I'd be as welcome as news from home—"

"Were—why, they couldn't have been married then!" exclaimed Peg's father.

"Wait a moment—I'm coming to that. Well, they both gave me the stony. I could see that he was egging Peg on to something and I had a hunch she hadn't quite gotten the right slant on it. Of course I didn't know what he said but I had an idea it was this 'fly with me to Arcady, the world forgetting by the world forgot stuff,' so"—Tommy flipped his cigarette, letting the ashes fall where they might—"I asked him if his wife knew he had the car!"

"His wife! His—his what?" gasped Peg's father.

"I had a hunch that he had put that across on her," explained Tommy calmly. "So I called up his house this morning. They'd had a quarrel and she knew he had left. She didn't mind that, but when I mentioned the fact that he had the car with him she hit the roof!"

"But—but I didn't know he had a wife. Peg never—"

"Peg didn't know it, either. Lemoyne is just the sort of a chap to forget to mention little details like that. But I looked him up when he first hove in sight. His wife's a good business woman, runs a very select boarding house and all that. Makes money. That's why Lemoyne can afford to write poetry."

"You knew all this? Why didn't you tell us—or tell Peg?"

"Oh, I preferred to play a lone hand. I had a feeling that fate had dealt me an ace but that Peg would trump it if I didn't watch out. I could just hear her asking what of it? 'You're positively mid-Victorian,' she'd say. 'So far as I'm concerned he can have a harem. Am I supposed to weep?'"

"But Great Scott, man—"

"Trust Peg to pull something like that and leave me looking foolish. So I laid low. Peg's been riding for a fall. The sooner she got it, the better. That's the way I looked at it, and—well, she got it good and plenty. I wish you could have seen her face. You see, she thought that

this fly with me stuff was a straightaway proposal—"

"But her telegram! It said she was married!"

"Oh," explained Tommy cheerfully, "she married me!"

"You!" Peg's father looked as if this were more incredible than all the rest.

"I know I'm not much," Tommy grinned, "but as between Lemoyne and me, I thought you'd prefer me. And Peg was ready to do something desperate. She was that mad and disgusted. So the next thing she knew she was married—to me."

"But—why, I never dreamed! You and Peg have always seemed just friends—"

"And not very good friends at that," commented Tommy. He grinned again.

"Well, what is a man going to do with a girl like Peg? Get down on his knees and propose? We've kidded each other so long that she simply couldn't have resisted the temptation to kid me about that—"

"Not if she really was in love with you!"

"Love? I don't know how girls played the game in your day, but I've got a hunch that the rules have been revised since. Girls—like Peg, that is—seem to think that economic independence has marriage beaten three ways from the ace. You have to hit them with a club of some kind and marry them before they recover. I had a hunch all along that Lemoyne might be my club."

"And you've married her?"

"For better or worse, in sickness or health—and an hour later the doctor broke the news to me that she had the mumps. Just as I was planning to take her over the road to New York. Can you beat that?"

Peg's father couldn't.

"I—I hope you'll be happy," he managed, finally.

"Thanks," acknowledged Tommy. "I'll chance it."

"It—I can't help feeling that it is very sudden. I hope you'll never, either of you, regret it."

"I shan't!" prophesied Tommy. "I've known Peg all my life and I've never seen her like"—his irrepressible humor came to the surface again—"in peace or war."

Love? Romance? Had this amazing generation done away with them utterly? Peg's father wondered. In his day—

But this was Peg's day—Peg's and Tommy's. From the reception hall Tommy went up the stairs, two at a time, to peek into Peg's room.

"Go away!" she commanded. "I know I'm a sight—"

Instead, he entered the room forthwith. "I've seen you look worse," said he judicially. "The day you tried to pick the powder from a blank cartridge and singed your eyebrows off—"

"Do I really look awful?" she cut in quickly.

And thereupon Tommy went down on his knees beside the bed and took her in his arms—mumps and all.

"Awfully good to me!" he told her, and the note of notes was in his voice. "I had to club you into matrimony. Do you mind, Peg?"

Youth does not wear its heart on its sleeves nowadays. But his was in his eyes—and Peg's was in hers as they looked at each other.

"Don't be silly!" she advised. "I always intended to marry you when I got around to it!"



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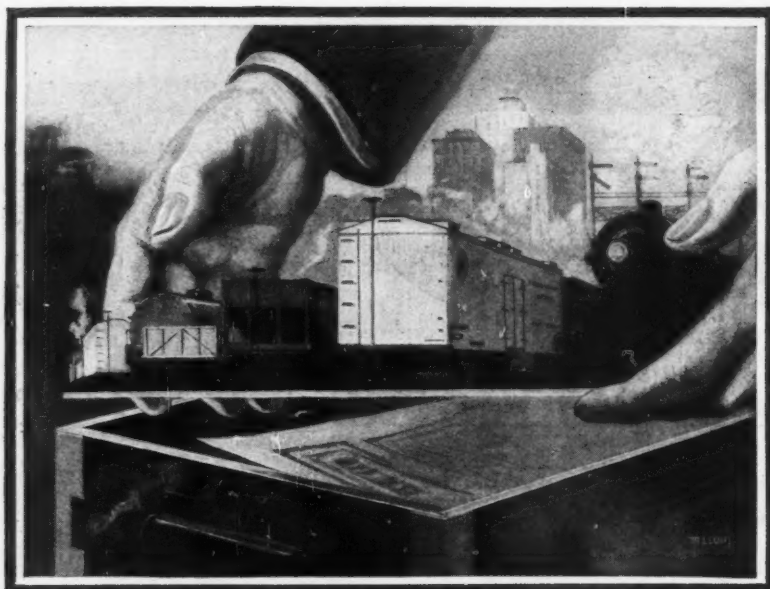
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Shaking Doris Off the Bough

(Continued from page 43)

strolls down to the gym where I can watch Swifty Joe showin' a couple of movie actors how to punch each other without gettin' hurt. It's a restful scene, but there's no inspiration in it. Then that night I find we're booked for a dinner dance at the Yacht Club, and instead of duckin', as I usually do, I climbs into my open face outfit and trails along. For one thing, I thought the Gridley Snells might be there and I'd have a chance to swap glares with 'em; and for another—well, you may not believe it, but I'd dug up an idea, all by myself.

But the Snells weren't among those present and I overheard someone say how Gridley was laid up from an attack of acute indigestion.

"Meanin' disposition," thinks I, and gazes around the ballroom at the so-called merry scene. As a matter of fact, it ain't much merrier than the five o'clock rush at a subway station, for doin' these new jazz steps on a crowded floor is an intricate and serious business.

I noticed a lot of the young couples, and while they would break their clinch at times and exchange a little frivolous chatter, mostly the girls bury their noses under their partners' left coat lapel and pay strict attention to makin' their feet and knees keep the rhythm.

It's only between dances, when they stream out on the verandas, that the giddy cackle breaks loose and the young things really seem to be enjoyin' themselves. First thing I knew I was caught in the middle of a giggly mob and carried into a corner.

Well, most of 'em were youngsters I'd seen grow up here in the neighborhood and could call by their first names, so I didn't mind. They didn't mind me, either. More'n half of 'em hailed me as "Shorty" or "Professor," and two frisky girls tried to kid me by lettin' on I'd asked 'em for the next fox-trot.

"You take out accident insurance on your toes and I will," I tells 'em.

About then, though, I gets my eye on this super-flapper, Peggy McLean, who's surrounded by a whole circle of admirin' young hicks; some squabblin' about who gets the next dance with her, others datin' up four or five numbers ahead and some just tryin' to get a word with her confidential.

Now I've known Peggy ever since she was a little freckle-faced kid ridin' around on one of her dad's dirt carts, and I knew Mac when he first started in the contractin' business up here in Westchester. So I was a bit curious.

She don't weigh in at much over ninety, this Peggy person, and she's still got a saucy snub nose and a perky little chin and plenty of freckles. She's no nearer a beauty than I am a highbrow. Course, there's a lot of high voltage stuff in them Irish blue eyes of hers, and I expect the way she tosses about that head of bobbed carroty hair does attract attention. But I could pick out a dozen better lookers who had been left stranded on the outskirts.

Yet Peggy was keepin' her retinue all to

Pinch Hitting for Santa Claus.

IN a few days now, you and your family will be wrestling with the great annual holiday problem, "What shall we give this year for Christmas?" There will be secret conferences, exhausting excursions into crowded department stores, the delivery of mysterious packages—and last minute shopping will run everybody ragged. Here, however, is a suggestion that will simplify at least a part of the burden of buying presents this year:

Give Something for the Car for Christmas

Automobile and accessory dealers in your town are all set to help out the amateur Santa Claus by having in stock a big assortment of accessory and equipment gifts for the motorist.

Many dealers are stocking new and unusual novelties. They are arranging special store and window displays, and will make every effort to help you select a suitable gift. The range of prices gives you the choice of being just as economical or as extravagant as your pocketbook dictates.

After all it's pretty difficult to decide on the proper kind of gift for many people. There's always the possibility of giving a present that the recipient already owns, or doesn't care for. But it's easy to size up the requirements of a motor car and to choose a present that will please the owner.

Presents for the car are always useful. And most of them are ornamental as well.

"A present for the dear old bus
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Following are a few suggestions for your shopping list:

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herself, throwin' a smile here and a pout there, and not makin' any more false moves than a juggler with six glass balls in the air. And right in the midst of it she spots a new arrival.

I'll admit she's a good picker, for this young chap who strolls by is all that a collar ad hero should be. Peggy gives him just one glance when she turns to whisper to the nearest youth. And a minute later she's being towed out of the crowd and down the veranda towards the smokin' room.

Somehow I had a notion to drift along, too. So I was near-by when the stranger is lugged out and presented.

"Didn't I see you at the Yale prom last winter?" I hears her ask. "There! I was sure I did. Really! You saw me, too? Now isn't that funny? And just because you remembered I'm going to decorate you with the order of the rosebud. Here! Hold down."

She plucks a flower out of her corsage bouquet and reaches up to put it in his buttonhole, her snub nose not two inches from his chin. Then she pats him chummy on the arm and says something in his ear. Whatever it was, it took. For the next three dances Peggy is led on to the floor by the newcomer, and by standin' on tip-toe manages to drape one arm around his neck as they swirls and pivots through the mob.

Course, he ain't allowed to have more'n two rounds before some of the other young hicks cuts in; but just before intermission I saw them go twosin' off into the moonlight with Peggy clingin' to his arm.

"That's the way to get 'em," I remarks to Sadie, givin' her a nudge.

"Oh!" says Sadie, "that's Peggy McLean. But she's an expert."

"Then she's the one I've been lookin' for," says I.

"For what?" demands Sadie.

"As a trainer for Doris the Dimpled," says I.

"Trainer?" says Sadie.

"Nothing less," says I. "Got all the tricks, ain't she? Well, why can't she show 'em to Doris? It's something that can be passed on, can't it? Anyway, I been watchin' her motions, and they don't look so complicated. Any girl with sense enough to learn tennis or piano playin' ought to be able to pick 'em up, especially from a professional like Peggy."

Sadie admits the idea ain't such a bad one, at that.

"But what makes you think Peggy would?" she asks.

"Oh, of course somebody ought to make it worth her while," says I. "Why shouldn't Doris come across? Some of her spare jewelry, or a neat little roadster for Peggy to drive. She'd never miss it, with her income. And Mac hasn't been doin' so well lately. I'll bet Peggy would take on a pupil, even for the sport of it."

"But just how—" begins Sadie.

"Come along, Sadie!" says I. "You could fix it up some way. I'll leave the details to you."

But while this hunch of mine for havin' Doris take lessons in love seemed kinda bright and clever to me, I don't think Sadie got more'n mildly interested in it. Anyway, two or three days passed and she hadn't done anything but chuckle occasionally when it was mentioned.

And then one forenoon I has a visit from Gridley Snell and two other men that he's appointed on his committee.

We had a short but snappy session.

"What were they here for?" asks Sadie.

"Oh, little matter of business," says I. "They was offerin' me a choice of sellin' the place at their terms or of bein' run out of town."

"Wha-a-at!" gasps Sadie.

"It's a cute plot that's been cooked up by the Snells," I explains. "They're sore because they think we're helpin' along this Doris-Percy affair."

"But—but they can't make you sell if you don't want to, can they?" asks Sadie. "Gridley Snell thinks he can," says I.

"Maybe we better lay off mixin' with romances, eh? We don't seem to be makin' much progress anyway."

"Don't we?" says Sadie, settin' her chin. "You just watch."

And say, she wasn't born Sadie Sullivan for nothing.

Half an hour later she's out in the car huntin' up Peggy McLean.

Well, I didn't follow all her moves, but I know she got Doris and Peggy together that afternoon, and the next day she announces that the Twombly-Cranes had invited Doris down to their Long Island place for a two weeks' house party of young folks.

"You must have been usin' the long distance," I suggests.

Sadie smiles, knowin'. "Peggy McLean is included, too," says she.

"And Percy?" says I.

"Certainly not," says Sadie. "He isn't going to see Doris again until—"

"Until she's finished her course, eh?" says I. "But can she earn a degree in that time?"

"It is possible that Doris and Peggy may spend another fortnight with the Pinckneys, up in the Berkshires," says she.

"Say, you're some shifty plotter when you get started, ain't you, Sadie?" says I.

"I never did care much for that Mrs. Gridley Snell," says Sadie, her blue eyes throwin' off sparks.

Still, you never can tell how schemes like that will work out. Besides, this was kind of a wild experiment that we'd never seen tested.

As the time went by I begun to have my doubts about it. And with Doris safe away from Percy, Gridley Snell kind of slacks up on his attempt to throw a scare into me. I expect he found I had a few good friends around, as well as himself, and that it wasn't goin' to be such a cinch to work up indignation. As for me, I grinned and let things ride. About all that happened was that young Percy didn't get his opera contract and had his ego badly jarred by the blow. He moped around with his chin down and talked of gettin' into a vaudeville team, or signin' up as soloist at some church.

Then, along about the middle of September, I heard Sadie plannin' a dinner party for the younger set, to be pulled off here at the house, with dancin' at the Yacht Club later. And on the night of the big event I noticed that Percy Pillgast was on hand, all gussied up in new model evenin' clothes, with his hair slicked back glossier than the top of a new limousine. And, as I suspicioned, Doris Snell arrives as a week-end guest.

"How come?" I asks Sadie.



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"It doesn't seem so long ago that most of my business was making shoes—every stitch, thread and heel-peg was my own.

"I know that I'm out o' the runnin' so far as shoe-making is concerned. I come in on the repairs. Put new soles and heels on them. Leather soles and heels that'll outwear any substitute you can name.

"Yes, I've tried all sorts of things for soles and heels and I've come to the conclusion that when you try to imitate nature or go her one better you're getting in over your head and hands.

"Well, come in again. Will those soles and heels wear? Why, friend, they're leather—real honest leather. There's real comfort in those shoes now and they won't come back to me again for months."

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"New shoes last me five or six months, and then I have them resoled and they are good for the rest of the year. Generally I have them rebuilt once more, and that means another five months' hard wear. When you tramp a beat for hours like I do, you want your feet to feel comfortable, and you don't want to feel the pavement through them. So, I make sure that they have solid leather soles and heels. Nothing else is near so easy on the feet. I have tried other things once or twice; but I stick to leather now."

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"Officially," says she, "Doris is still supposed to be with the Pinckneys."

"Think she's picked up any new tricks durin' the summer?" says I.

"Perhaps we'll see tonight," says Sadie. Well, I'll say we did. For, honest, I'd hardly have known her as the same girl. Somehow she has shaken that woodeny, dumpy look. She has her chin up and her shoulders back and both eyes workin'. She don't wait for Percy to come and find her and say hello. Not Doris. She ain't been downstairs two minutes, after dressin' for dinner, before she starts on a hunt for him.

When discovered, Percy is chattin' languid and bored with two young flappers who are teasin' him to sing something. Does Doris wait around with her eyes on the rug, sparrin' for an openin'? Not a second. She crashes right in, elbows the young things one side, and grabs Percy by the arm.

"Why, if here isn't my old pal!" says she. "Come right over in the corner, you wonderful man, and tell your Doris all about everything."

And you should have seen Percy stare at her.

He went, though, and the next I knew he was beamin' on Doris, and Doris was beamin' on him, and they were so lost to the world that Sadie had to go pry 'em apart when dinner is announced. All through the meal she vamped him, until he hardly knew whether he was eatin' salad or dessert; and when it's over, as the others were gettin' into their wraps for the drive to the Club, they was missin' again. We found 'em in the livin' room, with Doris at the piano and Percy leanin' over singin' to her. The piece was "If I had a million eggs to boil, I'd boil them all for yo-o-o-hoo," or something like that. At the dance it was the same thing, only more so. Percy don't seem to want to dance with anybody but Doris, and when he wasn't dancin' with her he was sittin' in some sheltered nook listenin' while she told him how wonderful he was.

Well, that was two weeks ago, and I wasn't surprised to hear that they'd got it all fixed up between 'em. Doris had told her folks how she couldn't possibly exist without Percy, and if they didn't stop throwing a fit every time his name was mentioned she'd just run off and marry him anyhow. So the other night she had Percy come around, and after lookin' him over the Snells decided that, as Doris had at last captured a man, they'd better make the best of it.

I hear the date's set for the fifteenth of next month and that Doris and Percy are to spend a year in Paris. Also, I notice that Peggy McLean is drivin' around in a zippy new roadster.

"She's some coach, that Peggy girl—eh, Sadie?" says I.

"So it seems," agrees Sadie.

"And since seein' her and Doris do their act," I goes on, "I can guess that the Northwest Mounted Police pinched their motto from our flappers."

"What motto?" asks Sadie.

"Why," says I, "that 'Get your man' stuff. Only a flapper never misses."

*A startling new way to get a wife
—you will find it described
by Sewell Ford in "Amos
Tries It Tudor" next month*

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The Luck of Clem Riordan

(Continued from page 90)

This might have been what he wanted to say. But nothing in Clem's training or heritage had fitted him to express this rather subtle thought, the more especially as he really did worship the troubled little angry beauty in the thin kimono and worn little mourning skirt. He had never been able to be quite natural in her presence, and he felt distressedly that somehow they were entirely out of sympathy at the moment.

"Ma seems to think that there was a sorter understanding between you and me, Ellen," he stumbled on, astonished himself, under all his uneasiness, at the stubborn limitations and the perversity of his own words as he heard them fall. "But I told her," Clem added thickly, with a nervous, gruff laugh, "that you hadn't no use for me, and that you weren't the kind that would get a crush on any fellow—that the most of them were crazy about you—and I guess I got it over to her—"

Ellen was watching him closely, her lips shut, a glittering fluff of bronze hair over the eyes that glinted blue fire.

What she wanted to say was something about her own perfect appreciation of his position—the rich man who wants to free himself from any entanglement with his old, obscure love before he is off to the new; about her resentful and contemptuous eagerness to release him from any real or imaginary obligations to her!

But with the strangely awkward, inelegant brevity of her race in moments of deep emotion, she merely looked at him for a long half-minute before saying "Sure."

After that, without another significant word, Clem went away.

"And that's the way lots of people's lives are affected forever, I guess," Ellen told herself dismally as the dreary weeks went by, January passed and February, and there was no more Clem in her life. "Clem'll marry, and I will too some day, I suppose; but not to each other—after all those years when we went together!"

There was a whole week in March when she walked under the bitter cloud of hearing that "Wilson and Riordan" had cleaned up fifteen thousand dollars on a lucky deal, and Clem's mother had bought a little farm in Ireland and was settled there. Nothing but prosperity for Clem! Not that it mattered; she never saw him now. Much better to forget him.

The sadness of it, the waste of it, put a new quietude into her manner, a new gravity into her blue eyes. For she knew now that she loved him, that that particular brown head, those particular big hands, that twisted pleasant mouth and friendly grin were somehow more vital in her life, more essential to her happiness, than all the other millions of men and women who moved about her.

"Seems like there's such a thing as being too successful!" Lizzie-Kate Kane said, after an hour's animated talk, with a kiss for her own unsuccessful man.

"You could have knocked me down with anything you'd be havin' in your hand,"

For Oil, Gas or
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A jury of eleven artists—sculptors, craftsmen, painters and critics—picked this, the design of Miss Mary Bishop, as the lamp combining the most beautiful proportions, harmonious tones and practicable design of all those at the Art Alliance of America's exhibition of 1923.

The base is cast in medallium, of rich, statuary bronze finish, which not only allows the artist's delicately refined contours and gracefully proportioned masses to be faithfully preserved in their charming simplicity, but also insures their permanency. The shade, designed as a unit with the lamp, is in tones of grey-gold-brown graded into ivory brown—chosen by Miss Bishop to carry her scheme of color harmony—with deep, rich brown stripes toward the bottom of the flare, and edges bound with strips of dull brass.

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to Sell Replicas of it for only \$5.90**

WEARIED with the drab commonplaces offered by lamp manufacturers, with their ill-proportioned, unbalanced designs and garish colors—particularly with those few poor specimens adapted for burning oil—the Decorative Arts League determined to procure, for reproduction, the most beautifully designed, harmoniously colored table lamp, adaptable for either oil or gas as well as electricity, that the best artistic talent in America could produce, cost what it would.

The assistance of the Art Alliance of America was enlisted and a great national competition arranged.

Cash awards of \$1,300 were offered, and eleven eminent artists and critics selected by the Art Alliance to act as jury. Over 250 artists entered the competition, from 26 different states and provinces. 307 different designs were submitted. Though all were beautiful, many of them surpassingly so, the final verdict went unanimously to the lamp of Miss Mary Bishop (illustrated above), and she received the Blue Ribbon and Grand Prize of \$600.00.

\$2,500 For One Lamp

Thus was secured for the League, at a total expense of something over \$2,500, the one design for a table lamp unmistakably supreme for its purpose. And this, the Blue Ribbon Lamp, each one bearing the artist's signature, is now offered for a limited time by the League to those who appreciate the possession of such artistic things.

Price—the Most Amazing Point of All

The price of the Mary Bishop Lamp, like that of all articles offered by the League, is actually less than is asked in stores for even the commonplace factory designs of similar type. It is \$5.90. Look about you in the stores and see how pitifully little you can get for even twice or three times that amount and then think that now, through the League's plan, you can for merely \$5.90 have for your home the lamp on which a jury of the most discrim-

inating judges of art conferred the Blue Ribbon.

That is the League's purpose—to prove that the most substantial and artistic things need cost no more than drab commonplaces if the right methods of production and distribution are used.

Most of the League's offerings are never advertised to the public, but are offered privately to corresponding members. (Such membership costs nothing—it merely registers your name as wanting to be informed of the League's offerings and gives the members, prices on them in case you ever wish to buy. (See Coupon below). Only a few times a year some especially great triumph, like Aurora, or this Mary Bishop Prize Lamp, is publicly announced, and then only for the purpose of widening the corresponding membership to include a few more discerning people.

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All League products are sold strictly subject to the purchaser's approval. All you need to do is to sign and mail the coupon. When the lamp comes you pay the Postman \$5.90 plus the postage. You then take five days to see the lamp lighted, to study its effect. If by that time you have not decided that you never before made so good a purchase, you return the lamp to us and all your money will be refunded in full. That is the League's way of doing business. Send the coupon now, for it might be months or years before you see another announcement of the League. So sign and mail this coupon now,—without risk.

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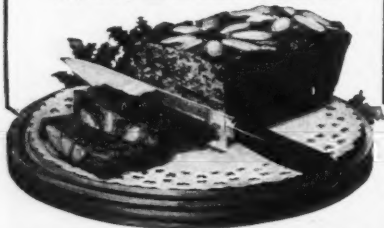
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said, Mrs. Callahan, after one of those vague silences so dear to Irish souls.

"Ellen took it very easy," Kate Oliver contributed. "But she had a queer paleness on her. What's she doing?"

"She run up to give a look at Monica and the boy!" said the proud grandmother of Martin Murphy, Second, now eleven days old. "Listen to them!" she added, as peals of young laughter floated downstairs. "I thought the two of them would have the child crippled on Sunday when he was christened! Sure, they stuck him in and out of every little dress he have—I never seen such goings on!"

"Sure, Monica's very pleased and contented that she would be having him," Mrs. Callahan said, pleased herself. "And they've a special blessing on them, them little posthumous ones has. She'll do very good now—Monica. But isn't it the queerest that's in it all," she resumed, returning to the newer and more fascinating topic of Clem Riordan's trouble, "that Reilly should be the old thief of the world, and dying on them, and Mr. Willy Wilson and Clem left to carry the whole of it, and maybe go to jail?"

"His father was a good man, that glory would never die on at all," Mrs. Murphy said, "and now look what the poor feller is in for! What did the paper say, Joe?"

"Reilly gyped the Government for about ten thou," Joe Kane repeated for the hundredth time. "It was when they was filin' their nineteen-nineteen income tax return; sure, hasn't there been an Internal Revenue inspector going over their books for the past two weeks? A very dark, ugly feller he is, and he claims it was a falsification—says he can prove Reilly done it deliberate!"

"It'll roon their business for them!" Lizzie-Kate said, trying to feel sorry.

"Roon their business!" Joe echoed scornfully. "Why, you heard what that feller in the office told Ellen, and you seen what the paper said? They're liable to get a ten thousand dollar fine, a year's imprisonment in jail and fifty percent additional to what they tried to do the government out of! Wilson and Riordan are cooked—they boys can put up the shutters—there's no one would ever trust them again with the worth of an old shilling itself!"

"And all the talk there's been about how smart Clem was, and the money he was makin', and this and that—and him in prison for a thief!" Mrs. Callahan muttered, shaking her head.

"There'll be talk about this," Mrs. Murphy opined darkly. "Ellen can thank her guarden angel she was well shut of him before all this was in it!"

"Well, I think it's coming to Ellen!" Mrs. Callahan said sturdily. "I'm not one for revenge, but she had a very warm heart for him once, and didn't he push her off from him with all the pride there was in him, when her brother died. Now she can just stand back and wash her hands of him and say: 'I wasn't good enough for you, me fine young lad. Now look what's come to you!'"

"You'd think she'd crow over him more than she did," Lizzie-Kate interposed. "She had a very odd look to her!"

"Mama—" said Ellen herself, in the hall doorway. They all turned quickly. There was the late light of a sweet April

afternoon lingering in the kitchen. It was Saturday, at about four o'clock.

Ellen wore a new thin gown of black taffeta and a broad white collar of immaculate organdie. On her soft little black silk hat there was one big creamy gardenia. Never, in all the hours of their secret admiration of her glowing young beauty, had Ellen Murphy's family seen her look as exquisite as she did then.

Her light coat, with its black-banded sleeve, was on her arm. "Mama," she said quietly, "I'm going back to town. I may not be home to dinner!"

Nobody spoke as she quietly crossed the kitchen and included them all in a good-by nod and went upon her way.

She seemed to herself to be floating, to be hardly conscious of what she did. The shabby familiar streets looked sweet and friendly to her, with the sunset light scattering itself through the new foliage of the elms and the whole world breathing ecstatically the first warmth of the year.

She was incapable of connected thought in the train; sat in a sort of pleasant stupor, with her cheek on her hand and her eyes on the moving landscape. She followed the crowd through the big station, got into the subway, always without hurry or confusion or hesitation after these troubled, hurried months.

One Hundred Sixty-Fourth Street—she had never been in this neighborhood before. The Riordans lived in one of these big handsome barracks of places: the red stone one—the creamy brick one—the gray granite one—

It was the creamy brick one: "Chillon Manor Court." Outside it was very imposing, with awnings and blazing windows; inside, a little narrow and cramped in effect. Mr. Riordan's apartment?

"Nobody answers," the telephone girl said. "But I think he come in, didn't he, Sherman?"

Sherman, scraping egg from a soiled linen coat cuff, opined, "Yas'm."

Ellen did not hesitate. "I'm his sister," she said calmly. "I'll go up."

"Leave me ring again," said Regina Duffy.

"No, I'll go up," answered Ellen Murphy. "He's in trouble."

"Is he *that* Riordan?—my friend asked me, I didn't know!" Regina responded interestedly. "Take the lady up, Sherman."

Sherman did more. For sheer love of beauty he admitted the lady to the Riordan apartment, and Ellen shut the door behind her and went in quietly, and through the parlor, and into the dining room. And here she found, as she had known she would find, Clem.

He was sitting in a wicker chair, at the window, with his body bowed over his knees and his head gripped in his big hands. He was all alone; the soft dying light was filling the ugly, narrow room with a sort of golden softness.

"Clem—" Ellen faltered. The man raised his head quickly, and they looked at each other smiling, yet through tears. And then Ellen was in his big arms again, after the lonely, hungry months, and the mahogany hair was tumbled, and radiant color came back with a rush into her pale face. "Clem," she whispered, when for a long time he had held her so, as if his arms could not drink in enough of her sweet youngness and roundness and dearness, "I don't mind if it's jail!"

He had less than and awkward about the public and that the almost resolute, to him, this mess, this bobbled. He da All this v "I co he stamr "I'm "We'll Clem, if He co lightly. made y hoarsely he had l lips more lifted he "Ther mouth all right "Wha Clem w they we Ellen in the v arm tig warm, s And a content Yoult and foot flirtati aside i loneline mourn mother, with th now. l life. H she wo Flurry toil, str a woma "Isn' really n Shou hardly financia But th were n she was and lov "Ma long w get bac "I'll wheres with golden to him hard a They She he gripping "Cle He foolish many "I'll

He had been worrying about so much less than this; about the mere ugliness and awkwardness of an investigation, about the lessened confidence of his public and the serious loss to his pocket, that the courage, the generosity of her almost took his breath away! Small, resolute, dauntless, she had come flying to him in his hour of trouble and loneliness, this little exquisite creature of the bobbed head and the wide, babyish collar.

He dared not undeceive her too soon. All this was too intoxicatingly sweet.

"I couldn't drag you into it, dear!" he stammered.

"I'm in it," Ellen said triumphantly. "We'll be married Monday! That is, Clem, if you want me?"

He could not joke, he could not answer lightly. "I've loved you since the day you made your first communion!" he said hoarsely, clumsily, gently. And although he had kissed her forehead often, and her lips more than once, he trembled now as he lifted her hand to kiss.

"Then," she said, with her own smiling mouth a little unsteady, "then that's all right!"

"What have I done to get you, Ellen?" Clem whispered. And for a long time they were still.

Ellen sat in his lap, in the wicker chair in the window, and kept one slim young arm tight about his neck and rested her warm, smooth young cheek against his. And as he held her so she looked dreamily, contentedly out across the teeming drive.

Youth, with all its unthinking gaiety and foolishness, its frocks and jokes and flirtations and irresponsibility, Ellen laid aside in this solemn hour. Grief and loneliness she laid aside. She might mourn her brother, sympathize with her mother, but her life was no longer one with theirs. She was Clem Riordan's now. His trouble was hers, his name, his life. His children would be her own, and she would love them as Lizzie-Kate did Flurry and the baby; she would rejoice, toil, struggle, achieve, mourn for her own, a woman in a world of women.

"Isn't it strange, Clem? You and me really married, after all the fuss?"

Should he tell her now that he could hardly be held responsible for more than a financial adjustment of Reilly's cheat? But there was time for that, and words were never easy to Clem. Enough that she was here, exquisitely, unbelievably small and loving, in his arms. Clem was silent.

"Mama," Ellen said dreamily, after a long while, "will be fit to be tied if I don't get back!"

"I'll—I'll take you to dinner somewhere," Clem began and stopped, choked with sheer felicity. This bewildering, golden prospect surely couldn't have come to him in a world so incredibly dark and hard an hour ago!

They were standing, ready to depart. She held him a moment more, little hands gripping his coat lapels.

"Clem, do you love me?" she smiled.

He stooped over her, grinned the dear, foolish, boyish grin she had missed for so many months.

"I'll—I'll tell the world!" said Clem.

COSMOPOLITAN readers will find another of Kathleen Norris's delightfully human stories in an early issue

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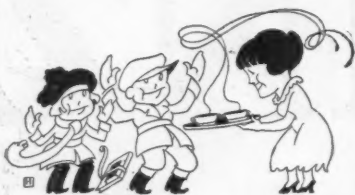
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ARTHUR MURRAY, Studio 884 290 Broadway New York



Keeping the Peace

(Continued from page 81)

least little uphill work was too much for me . . . Bruce made me go to a great specialist in Lausanne—such a dear, wise man—Doctor Schminnelpfenning. He said that a woman's back is one of the greatest mysteries of creation—one of the most delicate and subtle of all mechanisms . . . But it was very disappointing—very. He said that there was nothing to be done . . . I'll always have it—the trouble, I mean. It may not come on me for months at a time—or I might have a crick in the next five minutes . . . The maddening thing is that it is not really serious—just painful and upsetting. But Bruce and I are not going to let it make any difference in our lives, are we?"

"Of course not," said Bruce with loyal adoration. "But it kills me to see her suffer."

"When I have an attack," said Ruth, "Bruce is so gentle that you might think I was a basket of eggs."

"In Rome," said Bruce, "she fainted dead away!"

"I'll never forget," said Ruth. "When I was better Bruce rushed right out of the hotel and came back with this wonderful Roman gold necklace that I am wearing tonight."

"Whenever we went anywhere," said Bruce, "you should have seen the way people looked at Ruth. I picked up enough French and Italian to know what they were saying. They'd say: 'Look! Look! The beautiful American!'"

"Silly!" said Ruth. But in her heart she was pleased that of a thousand memories her husband should have picked upon this particular one for exploitation.

Ruth laid down the law about Europe, its manners, customs and arts, and her mother agreed with her on every point.

As for the Reverend Mr. Eaton, he did not follow the conversation any further than the subject of Ruth's back. His reflections on this subject were rather those of a cynical philosopher than of an agitated parent.

Frankly, he did not believe in Ruth's back. He doubted if these mysterious attacks would ever interfere with anything which she herself wanted particularly to do. He had known wives who had controlled husbands by headaches and spells of dizziness. By his readings he judged that not fifty years had passed since in England women had been in the habit of swooning at the slightest difference of opinion.

The newlyweds remained at the rectory for a number of days. All Westchester called and was called upon.

One day the Ruggles family called—Mr. and Mrs. Ruggles and Alice. It was an unexpected call. If Mrs. Eaton had been prepared it is possible that she would have sent the servant with the message that "the ladies were not at home." But she was caught halfway down the front stairs. The Ruggleses could see her through the front doorway, and Mrs. Ruggles, who was an impulsive and affectionate little creature, called out: "How do you do, Mrs. Eaton!"

Mrs. Eaton was obliged to descend the remaining stairs, to invite the Ruggleses

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Do You Whistle When You Seed Raisins?

WHENEVER I see a package of seeded raisins I think of what a southern friend of mine once told me. She had been brought up on an old-time southern plantation and her memories were as flavorful as a jar of mince meat. She said that when the little pickaninnies were set to work to prepare for the holiday pies and fruit cakes the warning always was "Whistle when you seed raisins."

But one accomplished little rascal could somehow whistle and eat at the same time, so they made her chop the suet. What a busy, jolly picture it makes. Reminds me of the story of Riley's where the little boy peeked in the window of the all gold fairy house while the preparations for a tea party were going on. "And they all set 'round a little gold tub and commenced a-peelin' dewdrops, just like they was peaches!"

Getting ready for holiday time is half the fun. Of course we don't have to seed raisins any more, nor crack and shell nuts, nor slice citron, nor divide candied orange peel into slivers. All this is done for us in clean factories. And suet is no longer considered a necessary part of a good plum pudding recipe. So that messy part of the work is gone. But the home spirit is not gone even though our pessimistic young writers try to make us believe so.

Father still likes to come in from the snappy air and open the front door to the warm smell of "sugar and spice and everything nice." The children still like to help by chopping nuts, sifting flour, measuring the fruit and lining the pans with nice smeary greased paper. It is part of their education in home making. And a very important part.

And when they help spread the thick, tangy, apple butter, over the top of the fruit cake, before it is put away to ripen! More fun than mak-

ing mud pies! And the fact that the apple butter comes out of a jar, with the label of a large food manufacturer on it, instead of out of a crock the filling of which meant hours of back-breaking labor on mother's part, doesn't take anything away from the pleasure of the children or the flavor of the cake. But it adds a whole lot to mother's pleasure both in the making and the eating.

The fact that the crust and the filling for the mince pie, that adds its festive tone to the holiday dinner, are factory-made doesn't make an atom of difference to your guests. The little crimps that you put around the edges, the careful way you bake it, the light snow of powdered sugar that you put over the top of the finished pie are what give it the home touch.

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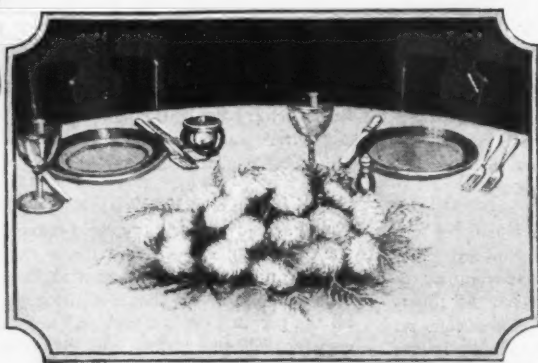
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into the parlor, and to admit that she did very well.

Ruth sent word that she would be down presently; Edward, learning that Alice was in the house, felt his heart give a great thump and made a shy advance upon the parlor from the kitchen end of the house.

Tea was served; Mr. Eaton and Bruce came in from the study accompanied by a vague smell of pipe smoke. Alice and Edward were given a large piece of cake apiece, and retired to a far corner to eat it, to whisper and giggle and to listen to what their elders and betters had to say and to giggle still more.

Mrs. Eaton was on her mettle. There were atheists in the house, and people who believed in the descent or ascent of man from a monkey. Obviously such beliefs were no fault of Mrs. Ruggles. You could always look for a man at the bottom of blasphemy and free thinking. For Mrs. Ruggles, therefore, Mrs. Eaton had something the attitude which a condescending but sympathetic woman might have for a delicate sister woman who through no fault of her own was constantly exposed to contagious and fatal fevers.

Toward Mr. Ruggles she affected an air of complacent pity.

"Yes," she said, "it is a sweet old house. What I chiefly love about it is the sense of peace and security which it gives me. Many wise and godly men and women have lived in this house and left a certain something of their own righteousness and strong Christianity. Nothing so unites a family as a common belief—faith."

Even Mrs. Eaton felt that she had said was a little forced and at the same time a little mixed. There was a short silence, which Mr. Ruggles broke with a most innocent expression on his face.

"What," he said, "do you hear from John—and—er—Mark?"

Mrs. Eaton could have killed him. Mr. Ruggles might with no less insult have said, "If your family is as united as all that, why did the two older boys run away?"

"They are well," said Mrs. Eaton solidly. "We are looking forward to seeing them in the holidays."

This was Mr. Eaton's opportunity to make a fool of himself.

"You don't mean it!" he said excitedly. "You have had letters?"

Mrs. Eaton gave him a look which froze his marrow. "Yes," she said, "I have had letters."

Meanwhile the children in the far corner were taking stock of all that had happened since their last meeting.

"Is it true," said Alice, "that you are going to be a clergyman like your father?"

"So mother says."

"But when the time comes you'll run away like your brother did?"

Edward wriggled uncomfortably.

"Promise you will and maybe I'll run away with you."

"You wouldn't!"

"Dare me!"

Edward nodded.

"Then I will," said Alice. "We'll go to the South Seas."

"Why?" asked Edward.

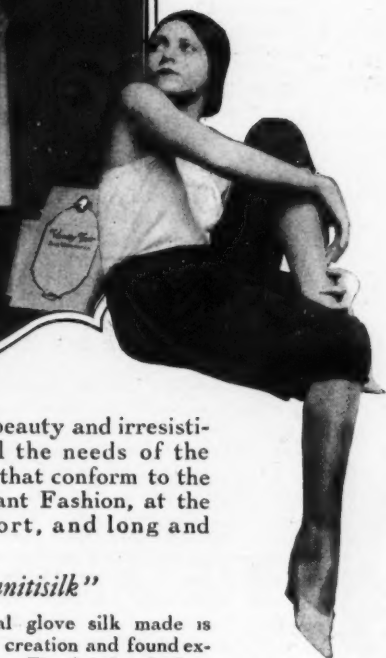
Alice quoted from a more famous Alice. "Why not?" she said.

This floored Edward completely and also delighted him so that he burst out laughing

For Milady's Modern Whims



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and received a reproving glance from his mother.

She had interrupted the conversation in which she was engaged, signaling peremptorily for silence in order that the reproving glance might be the more telling. She turned to Mr. Ruggles and said with a certain reproachfulness:

"At least, Mr. Ruggles, you will agree with me that some of the old sayings still hold water; as for instance, 'Little children should be seen and not heard.'"

"Bless me," said Mr. Ruggles—the agnostic—"I don't know which I'd rather give up—looking at the children or listening to them. I like to do both."

"Our children," said Mrs. Eaton, "will have to take up the burden of civilization where we leave off. That is where good training will tell."

"Don't you think it is a pity, Mrs. Eaton, that we should have allowed civilization to become such a burden? We have been reading Herman Melville's 'Typee' out loud. It's all about the South Sea Islands. The people in those islands eat and swim and laugh and wear garlands of flowers. They are very sweet-natured. I find myself envying them. Out of such civilization as they have they have made a game."

"They live in darkness," said Mrs. Eaton, "except such as have been converted."

"But it wouldn't seem dark," said Mr. Ruggles, "if one didn't know that it was dark, would it, Mrs. Eaton?"

"I don't know what you mean, Mr. Ruggles, unless you mean that ignorance is bliss."

"I think that is just what I do mean, Mrs. Eaton. Yes, that is just what I do mean. And I go a step further. I believe that where ignorance is bliss it is folly to be wise."

"I shan't argue with you Mr. Ruggles. I see that you are far better used to sophistry and hair-splitting than I am. I am an old-fashioned woman. And I daily thank God that this should be so."

Meanwhile Alice in the far corner: "... And you pick your bread and meat off the trees and when you bathe you simply go and stand under a waterfall, and if you've got an almanac with you and can predict an eclipse of the sun or of the moon they all beat their heads on the ground and make you king ... But I'd be the queen."

Edward: "How'd we get there?"

Alice: "In a boat, silly. They're islands."

Edward: "My brother John has been to some of them. He says in some places the mosquitoes are worse than in Westchester. And he says the natives are dying off from drinking whisky and smallpox."

Alice: "I know that, but that isn't everywhere. That's only in the islands where they've taught them to be Christians. Father says that drunkenness and disease follow the Cross ... How do you suppose we would like it if they came over here and beat their religion into us?"

Edward: "I could stand it all right. But ..."

Here the two children glanced at Mrs. Eaton. A thought had struck them in common. The notion of Mrs. Eaton's being converted to some other religion than her own by a sudden rush of naked

savages was rather appalling. Alice giggled.

Edward: "Is it true that they eat people?"

Alice: "Some of them do sometimes. But we wouldn't go to those islands. They call it Long Pig. When there are too many babies they bury them alive."

Edward: "Last year when there was so many tent caterpillars mother burned whole nests of them with a torch. She said she'd teach them."

Alice: "Probably that's just what they say to the babies."

Among their elders, and in some instances perhaps better, the brunt of the conversation had fallen upon Mrs. Eaton and Mr. Ruggles. Mr. Ruggles being always plausible and amiable, it would have been difficult for anyone less opinionated and belligerent than Mrs. Eaton herself to have conversed with him for five minutes without agreeing with everything he said. Neither Mr. Eaton nor Bruce Armitage cared to agree with Mr. Ruggles or appear to approve of him in Mrs. Eaton's presence. The consequences, after Mr. Ruggles's departure, would have been disagreeable. Ruth did not wish to exert herself for the benefit of persons whom she considered her social inferiors, and nothing was expected of persons so young as James and Sarah.

James pretended to himself that he was watching a game of tennis. When his mother spoke he looked at her as if she were the player who had just struck the ball, and when Mr. Ruggles spoke James looked at him in the same way. At a rapid interchange his head got to swinging so fast that Sarah, who had been watching him for some time, snickered and was promptly reproved by Mrs. Eaton.

"It's James, mother," whispered Ruth. "He can't keep his head still. He keeps wagging it."

Not wishing to scold her favorite, Mrs. Eaton suggested that the children go outside and play.

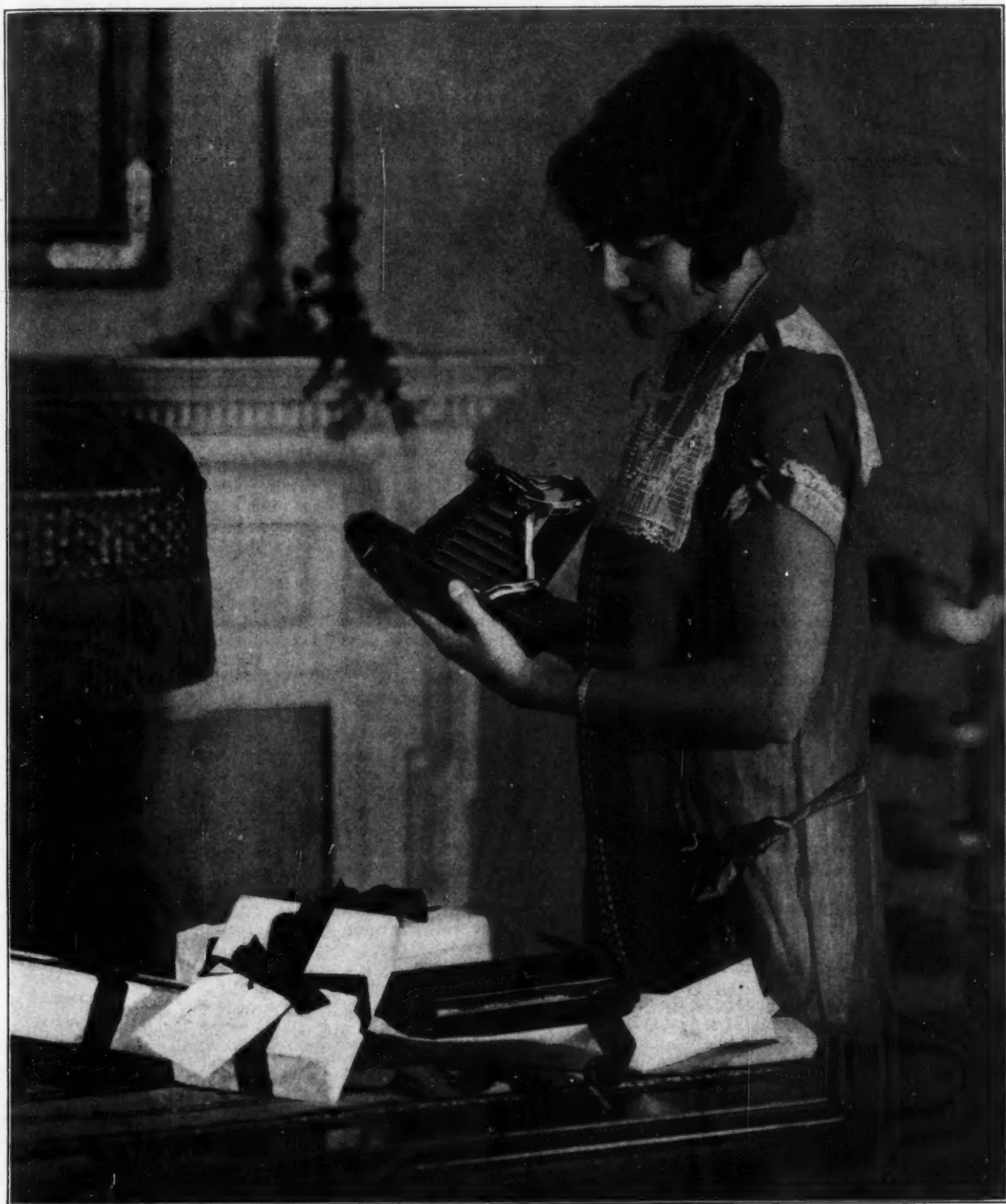
James jumped to his feet and crossed the room to where Edward and Alice were sitting.

"Hello, Alice," said he. "We haven't shaken hands yet ... Come along out ... I'll show you some baby rabbits ..."

Then James, always sophisticated and at his ease, pulled Alice's hand through his arm and, followed by Edward and Sarah, marched gaily from the room.

During the next half-hour Edward experienced his first symptoms of jealousy. James, perhaps because he wished to tease Edward, perhaps because he had been suddenly attracted by the child's prettiness, took entire charge of Alice and proceeded to ingratiate himself with her. He treated her as if she had been grown up. He said he liked the way she did her hair and said that he couldn't make out if her eyes were blue-black or purple. Anyway, she could go around telling herself that nobody else had a pair like them. Did she really want to see the baby rabbits? Well, they lived in a hole back of the big oak tree. They were wild rabbits, only they weren't wild.

James dipped his hand into the hole and pulled out the three baby rabbits by their ears. Alice hugged them, and laughed at their frightened eyes, and felt their hearts beat. When the rabbits had been



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returned to their nest, James suggested a game of hide and seek in the dusk.

"I'll count out," he said, "and see who's it."

Pointing rapidly to each of the children in succession, he repeated the old counting out verse:

"Intry, mintry, cutry, corn,
Apple seed and apple thorn,
Wire, Briar, Limber, Lock,
Three geese in a flock.
One flew east and one flew west
And one flew over the cuckoo's nest."

Sarah was *the*—Alice was *cuckoo's*, and Edward was *nest*. Edward was therefore it. He was stood with his face to the big oak tree, put upon his honor to keep his eyes shut until he had counted a hundred.

At the first count Sarah fled in one direction and James and Alice in another.

It took the little boy a long time to count an honorable hundred, and when he had finished, the dusky woods back of the rectory were empty and silent. Edward ran hopefully to the nearest tree and looked behind it. Then he ran to the next tree.

He hunted everywhere. Twenty minutes passed. Once he thought that he heard James and Alice giggling at him. His heart grew heavy and bitter. It wasn't fair to leave him all alone like that and to hide where you couldn't be found. You were supposed to hide in easy places so that one person wouldn't have to be it *all* the time.

Then Ruth appeared at the back door and called, "Where's Alice, Eddie?"

"I don't know," he shouted back in a mournful voice. "Why?"

"They're going home."

At that, from almost directly above Edward's head there was a sound of giggling. Then James dropped lightly to the ground from the lower limbs of a tree and turning caught Alice in his arms as she half slid and half dropped. He held her there a moment with her feet clear of the ground.

"Give us a kiss," he said, "and I'll put you down."

Alice laughed and kissed him. And Edward's heart became very heavy in his breast.

But there were some things that Mrs. Eaton couldn't do to her boys. She couldn't keep them from growing up. And she couldn't keep the two who had run away from home from getting on in the world. This was a terrible cross to her. When John had gone to sea she had made dire prophecies. He would come home like a whipped dog with its tail between its legs and he would think that home was a pretty good place and Dear Mother a very wise woman, and he would be very happy to do exactly as he was told. But nothing like this had happened. And when John did finally come home he was the first mate of a fine three-master, and in love with the sea.

Edward had just passed his thirteenth birthday at the time of John's visit. He had a pimple on his chin and his voice was suffering from tremendous ups and downs. And except for the servants he was alone in the house. James and Sarah were on a visit to dearest grandmother, and Mr. and Mrs. Eaton had driven off in the carriage to console with some parents who had just lost an imbecile child.

Edward was happiest when he had the house to himself. He had been getting along pretty well with Dear Mother, thanks to a highly developed system of lying and hypocrisy, but Sarah, who knew too much about him and was constantly threatening to tell, made his life miserable. James also chose to be rather horrid to his little brother, snubbing him and sneering at him, and for James, Edward entertained a scantily veiled hatred and contempt, not unmixed with fear. Though James was nineteen and occasionally talked of what he was going to do and be, it was obvious that he had no ambition to do anything worth while or to be anything except what he was. He came and went almost without question and Mrs. Eaton managed somehow or other to keep him fairly well supplied with money. He danced well and was a great ladies' man. Men did not like him.

Mrs. Eaton possessed a thick "Family Medicine" which the children were forbidden to look at, and into which Edward during his mother's absences had managed to read as far as those diseases which begin with an *M*. At the time of John's visit he had dug this book out of the lower drawer in which Dear Mother kept it hidden and had taken it down to the library, where the sitting was more comfortable than in Dear Mother's room; and he had read as far as "*Mumps*—First symptoms of," when suddenly he heard the front door pushed boldly open and a strong merry voice that shouted "Ship ahoy—ship ahoy!"

Seven years had passed since Edward had seen his big brother. But he had not a moment's doubt as to the owner of that voice. He was a loving child, and as he rushed out into the hall shouting "John! John!" his heart throbbed wildly.

"My Lord, how you've grown!" exclaimed John.

First he hugged Edward to his breast and then he held him at arm's length and turned him this way and that.

"You're going to be a bigger man than I am," said John. "Let me feel your chest. It's like a young nail keg . . . Feel the boy's biceps once, will you?"

There was a short silence, during which the two brothers stared affectionately into each other's eyes.

John wore a close-cropped black beard and mustache. His hair was no longer parted in the middle but brushed back in a rough wave with curling tendencies. His eyes glistened, and he was deeply moved.

"But Eddie," he said presently, "what's all this I hear about you? Is it true? Mother writes that you are determined to go into the church when you grow up."

In answering, Edward's chief trouble was with his voice. It kept sinking suddenly to untried depths and rising toward unattainable heights. But he managed to say:

"Mother wants me to, John. She's dead set on it. But I don't want to, and when the time comes I'll get out of it. No use telling her I won't *now*. You know mother."

John sighed. And he understood perfectly.

"But where is everybody?"

Edward told him. Mother and father would be back before long. James and Sarah weren't expected until tomorrow. Sometimes Bruce and Ruth came up for

Sunday, but not so often as formerly. Ruth didn't like the country.

John knew that. He had called on Ruth and the new brother on his way home. Ruth had patronized him. She had not seemed to think that a brother in the merchant marine was much of a social asset. But Bruce had been fine. Pity to coop a fellow like that up in a city! He would have made a fine sailor.

They went into the parlor, and for a few moments John looked from one familiar object to another. There had been few changes. There were fresh pieces of Dear Mother's handiwork in her favorite reds and purples draped over chair backs and the corners of pictures, and there was a new rug in front of the fireplace. John noted everything. Presently he noticed the family medicine book lying open and face down. He picked it up.

"Mumps," he said, and laughed. Then he handed the book back to Edward and said: "I got as far as Ophthalmia. When you read all about the horrible diseases in this book, do you feel as if you were developing all the symptoms? That's the way it made me feel. Does mother still keep this book in the lower drawer? If I were you I'd chase upstairs and put it back before she comes home. I'd hate to see you caught with it almost as much as I would have hated to be caught with it myself."

When Edward returned to the parlor it was to discover John in the act of lighting a short black pipe.

"You'll catch it!" said Edward.

"Nothing like trying," said John. "Ever smoke?"

Edward shook his head.

"It's a good plan not to smoke till you've got your growth, but don't go through life without giving it a trial. It never hurt anybody yet, and it's a lot of comfort."

"Mother says it turns people's lungs black."

"A blackish green, I believe," said John. "And what harm does that do? The sun turns faces brown, and cold weather makes fingers blue and noses red."

"A pipe smells good," said Edward, "don't it?"

John nodded.

"Lots better than some of the perfumes women use. Ruth smells like a drug store. What's the matter with her back, anyway? Is she faking?"

"She does it," said Edward, "to make Bruce feel bad, and then he'll do anything she wants."

A new photograph of James caught John's eye.

"James?" he asked.

"Don't you recognize him?"

"Looks like a lady-killer," said John. "I don't hear of James doing anything very enterprising. Now Mark's different. There's a fine boy. I've gotten in touch with him and we correspond as regularly as the kind of a life I lead lets us. Seems funny to think of Mark making two ears of corn grow where only one grew before. What do you want to be?"

"I'd like to explore places. At least, that's what I think I'd like to do. But one rainy day mother let me have the paints she used to paint on china with, and I mixed up a color that looked just like the sky, and I drew the big oak tree and colored it and it looked like it. And I

Keeping your child's hair beautiful

What a mother can do to keep her child's hair healthy—fine, soft and silky—bright, fresh-looking and luxuriant



THE beauty of your child's hair depends upon you, upon the care you give it. Shampooing it properly is the most important thing.

It is the shampooing which brings out all the real life and lustre, the natural wave and color, and makes the hair soft, fresh and luxuriant.

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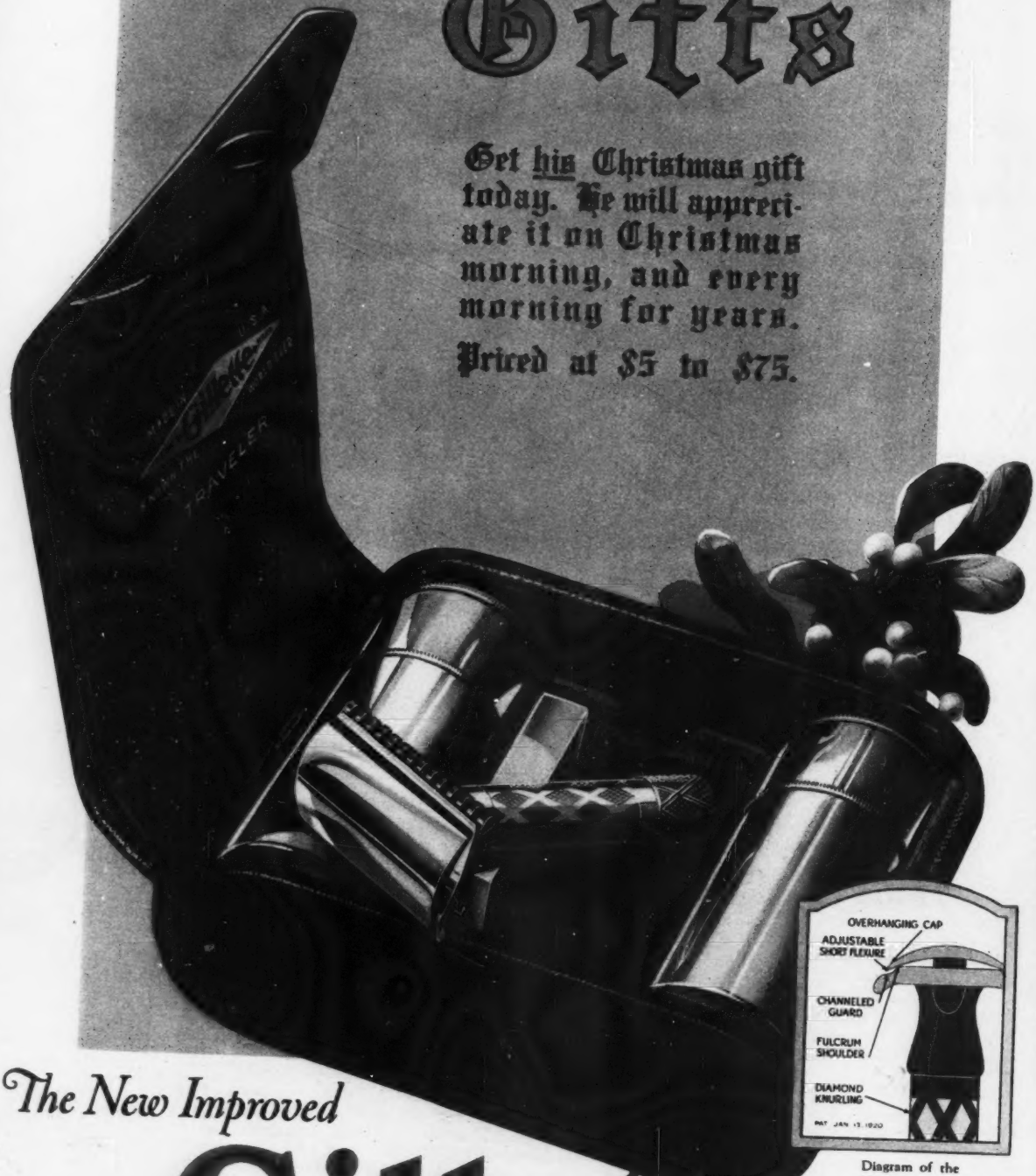



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painted every day till the paint was all gone."

"Show 'em to me—the pictures you painted," said John.

Edward ran away to a secret hiding place and returned with his little works of art.

Like all trained seamen, John was an accurate observer. He perceived at once that Edward had the same faculty. The subjects which the little boy had painted were astonishingly well drawn, and here and there the coloring was warm and true.

John made an instant and characteristic decision.

"I can't help you to explore places, Eddie," he said. "I wouldn't know how to go about it. But it'll be three or four years before you know what you really want to do. Whatever that is, if it's decent and honest, you do it. Promise?"

Edward promised.

"If it's painting, I'll help. I'll have a ship of my own then, and out of my pay I'll manage to keep you somewhere where you can get good instruction and learn all about it. Paris, I guess. But you'd be pretty young to be paddling your own canoe, and I wouldn't want to take the responsibility unless you'd make me some solemn promises and keep 'em—not to drink or smoke until you were twenty-one—the red and white wine you'd get in the Latin Quarter wouldn't count—that's good for people. And—I don't know how much you know about life . . . Men and women and all that?"

Edward turned a slow red, thus indicating that like most American boys of thirteen he was pretty well posted.

" . . . And I'd want you to promise not to get mixed up with any woman, either . . . Eddie, every trouble I've run across in this world or heard tell about has had a woman at the bottom of it. It's always either what the world calls a bad woman, or else it's what the world calls a good woman . . . How's father?"

"He's all right."

"Don't ever forget," said John with staid vehemence, "that father is the best father that anybody ever had."

John was able to remain at home for nearly a week. And all Westchester with the exception of a few families who had begun to imagine themselves people of fashion called to see how the minister's black sheep had turned out.

Westchester discovered that the black sheep had turned into an honest, straightforward and widely traveled young man. He had found time to read, and sea life, instead of roughening him, had made him very quiet in speech and fastidiously neat and clean.

But Dear Mother insisted on mourning over him. She felt that he had sunk pretty low in this world for a minister's son and that he would sink still lower in the next. A fine reverence for the created world and all that is beyond the reach of man's understanding, and conduct which closely resembled that outlined in the Golden Rule, could not pass for Christianity in Mrs. Eaton's eyes, and when one morning at breakfast John told Edward that there didn't seem to be very much doubt that man had descended from some kind of an ape, and that the ape in turn had descended from some kind of an oyster, she felt that he was indeed lost.

"Nice ideas, I must say," she said, "to put into the head of an innocent child who is destined to go into the church."

But John smiled and said:

"You *do* believe that the world is getting better, don't you, mother?"

"Through faith and prayer, yes."

"And that if it keeps on getting better and better it's bound to be perfect in the end?"

"That will take a long time, I fear."

"But you admit that it's bound to happen if we keep on improving?"

Mrs. Eaton admitted that.

"And you feel, mother, don't you, that even the best people alive today are far from perfect?"

Mrs. Eaton admitted this very readily.

"Then you believe in evolution," said John. "Father's the best man I know, but I believe there's more difference between father and a perfect man than there is between the highest type of ape and father."

"Man," asserted Mrs. Eaton sweepingly, "has a soul. That is what makes the difference."

John smiled very sweetly at his mother, and gave up. There was no arguing with her, or with Sarah, for that matter. Sarah snubbed him continually and tried to make him feel that he had slipped socially.

On the afternoon of that preceding John's departure, a young woman called at the rectory and asked for James. As luck would have it, it was the housemaid's afternoon out, and John, who happened to be passing through the hall when the bell rang, opened the door.

The young woman, who was pretty but fragile looking, did not speak at once.

"Did you wish to see Mrs. Eaton?"

John asked. "Because, I'm sorry, she's off visiting."

"I came to see young Mr. Eaton," said the young woman. "Mr. James Eaton."

John could not have explained why this simple statement should give him a sinking feeling in the pit of the stomach, but it did.

"Well, you can leave any message with me," he said slowly. "I am John Eaton—a brother."

"He isn't here?"

John shook his head.

"I could wait."

"Yes. But there's no telling when he'll be home. Not before tea time, I imagine."

The young woman's face hardened.

"I've walked all the way from Westchester village," she said, and then her eyes brightened a little. "You don't remember me, but I remember you. Father had the harness shop. You used to pass twice a day going to school and coming home."

"I remember your father. I broke my belt once, and he mended it for me and wouldn't take any money. He's well, I hope?"

She shook her head. "Father's dead," she said. "Your brother heard about it and came to see us. He was very kind and helped mother with money for the funeral."

"I'm glad to hear that about James."

The young woman shrugged her shoulders.

"Better come in," said John, "and rest. You've had a long walk."

She moved a little as if she were in a trance, and John finally led the way into

the parlor, as he found difficulty in getting her to precede him. When she was seated he looked at her carefully, smiled suddenly but not very merrily and said:

"Why do you want to see my brother?"

She did not answer at once. But after quite a long silence she said: "I've got to see him."

"I wish you'd be frank with me and tell me why."

But she wouldn't be frank, at first. She set her lips in a straight line and stared past John at a picture on the wall. Her reticence, however, amounted to communication. And John's speculations were of an exasperated and unpleasant nature. He hoped that he would be able to get rid of the young woman before his mother's return.

"I'm sorry," he said after a while, "very sorry that James isn't here. I'm afraid you've had your long walk for nothing."

"I think," she said, "that I'd better wait till he comes. I've written him five times to come and see me and he hasn't even answered." She paused and added with deliberation, "He doesn't want to see me."

John had been trying hard to remember the old harness maker's name. He recalled it now—Jackson.

"You're Miss Jackson," he smiled. "I've just managed to remember. Tell me. Is it money you need?"

She jumped to her feet with her reticence broken and a sudden energy of revelation.

"I do need money like anything," she said. "And—surely you must have guessed—I need my name changed. It's got to be changed to Mrs. James Eaton and it's got to be changed quick. There, I've told you. And I don't care *what* you think of me."

John stepped suddenly forward and turned the girl to the light. His face was hard and set. For some moments he looked into her eyes, and she met the look without flinching.

"I believe you," he said, and smiled reassuringly. "And it's what I think about James that counts now . . ."

"He helped us after father's death," said Miss Jackson, "and I thought he was our friend and meant everything he said . . ."

"You don't need to tell me. I've guessed what kind of a boy he is. It's in his face. And now he wants to cut and run . . . But you want him to marry you? Well and good. He shall. But if I were you I'd face any disgrace or any poverty sooner than be married to James. Do you love him?"

"I thought I did. But I'm so mad with him now I don't know."

John pulled out his watch. "There's a train from Bartow Station in twenty minutes. You can just make it. I'll give you the money for the ticket. You want James to marry you. He shall. Don't be afraid. Don't worry . . . James and I will come to your house tomorrow at eleven o'clock."

"I believe you," she said simply.

"But I want you to promise me one thing—that the marriage will be secret until James is on his feet and can support you. You wouldn't like living here. My mother would make you unhappy."

During dinner John was unusually gay and vivacious. After dinner he invited James to go for a stroll. Edward begged

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to be allowed to go too, but John laughed him off.

"There's something particular and peculiar and private that I am going to ask James to do for me," he said, "and nobody else can do it."

So the two brothers, tall strapping fellows, started off into the starlight, through swarms of twinkling fireflies, and became lost to view in the shadows of Pelham Wood.

James had not especially wanted to go for a walk with John, whom he did not like, but being easy-going and prone to follow all lines of least resistance, he had found difficulty in refusing.

"At sea," said John, when he had gotten his pipe going, "when you can't break a man to discipline by straight square dealing you sometimes find it necessary to lay him out with a belaying pin . . . This afternoon, James, the Jackson girl came to see you."

From a state of bored good nature James turned instantly to one of the liveliest anxiety and foreboding.

"She told me," continued John, "how after her father's death you came—and played the good angel."

John's voice was noncommittal, and from this fact James gathered a momentary hope. But this was to be instantly dashed.

"She needs money," said John, "and she needs your name. And for my part I don't choose to go to sea and leave behind me a niece or a nephew that hasn't any name."

"How do you know," said James in a truculent way, "that it is your—your relation?"

"It was obvious," said John, "that she was speaking the truth. What do you propose to do?"

"What do I propose to do? Well, I propose to think that out for myself, thanks." James's ugly streak was trying to show. "You paddle your own canoe and I'll paddle mine."

"You will marry her, of course," said John.

"Why should I? A lot you know about women. It was as much her fault as it was mine."

"I have often wondered," said John, "from whom you inherit your exquisite chivalry . . . Oh, James," he exclaimed, "shame on you! You have only one life to live. Don't you even want to start it right? Where are your fine clothes and your wheeling ways going to get you?—to what port will they bring you? There must be a streak of decency and manliness in you somewhere. Marry this girl—you've got to do that anyway—and then come to sea with me. She can manage somehow on what you can give her from your pay. I'll chip in. You don't like me. But the sea will make a man of you and you'll thank me and we'll be friends."

"I dislike the sea intensely," said James.

"What do you like—the land—business? You've got to support your wife somehow."

"I'm not married yet, you know," said James. "If you knew a little more about the world . . . Why, that girl would be like a millstone around my neck."

James may have known a lot about the "world" but he knew very little about his brother. John stopped short, knocked the ashes from his pipe with deliberation and returned it to his pocket. Then he drew

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a deep breath, clenched his right fist and drove it with a sudden demoniac force and fury into that part of James's anatomy which, after the famous fight between Corbett and Fitzsimmons at Carson City, received a tremendous publicity under its rightful Latin name of solar plexus.

And for a long time thereafter, in the heart of Pelham Wood, James Eaton lay unconscious at the feet of his brother John.

The first words that James managed to speak were! "You dirty coward!" Then he struggled to a sitting position and was sick.

John refilled his pipe and lighted it and waited. Then he said: "I hit you in the stomach so as not to mark your head. I don't want mother to know that we've been quarreling . . . If you want any more I'll give it to you in the same place."

"What did you come home for, anyway?" cried James angrily. "Nobody wanted you."

"Get up," said John, "and don't talk like a woman. You ought to have been a girl. But you aren't and we've got to make a man of you."

James got to his feet with difficulty, and without another word turned and started slowly back toward the house. John followed at the same pace, but when they had thus proceeded for some two hundred yards he quickened his steps, caught up with James and laid his hand on his shoulder.

James shook his shoulder to free it, much as a petulant child might have done.

"Before we go back to the house," said John, "I want your word that you'll marry the girl and come away to sea with me. That would be easiest. Nobody need know about the marriage—least of all mother—if that's what you are afraid of." James made no answer. "I promised the girl that we would be at her house tomorrow at eleven and that you would marry her."

"If you're so interested in her, why don't you marry her yourself?" exclaimed James. "And besides, I thought you had to go back to your ship tomorrow."

"I can take the five o'clock train," said John. "That will get me to Boston by midnight. But I'll start right after breakfast as I always intended, and you'll come with me to see me off. And we'll simply stop off at Westchester to do the right thing and then you'll send back word from the city that I've persuaded you to make a voyage with me . . . It's to the Old World. You'd like that . . . We'll take a cargo of claret in Bordeaux and while it's loading we'll be able to run up to Paris for a day or two . . . When we come back if you find that you don't like the sea you can try something else. But it won't hurt you to give it a trial."

"Look here," said James, "I'm not going to marry that girl and I'm not going to sea with you. So what are you going to do about it?"

John's voice had been very kind and tolerant. But a stern note now leaped into it.

"What am I going to do about it?" he said. "Why, the best I know how—according to my lights."

And suddenly and once more in the region of the solar plexus he struck James a terrific blow.

This time James, who had not lost

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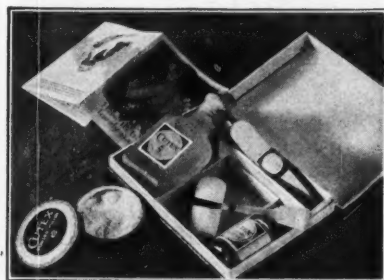
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consciousness but thought that he had been killed, thrashed about on the ground like a newly landed salmon and gasped horribly to recover some of the air which had been knocked out of him.

When they reached the house at last he was a sick boy, but he had promised to do as John wished.

The next morning when John had dressed and was about to go down to breakfast he perceived a sheet of paper which must have been pushed under his door during the night. He picked this up and held it close to his face, for the light was bad, and read the following:

To John Eaton:

Promises made under force don't count, you dirty bully. I am going to vanish for a few days and you can go to blazes.

James Eaton.

John walked to the narrow dormer window and looked out over the tree tops. He might have known better than to have trusted a man whose mind worked like a woman's. He was very angry—but with himself.

"A nice mess I've got myself into," he thought, "making promises that I can't keep to a girl I'm not under any obligations to, and trusting to the word of a dirty rat like that James. I wonder where the skunk is hiding."

Gouverneur Morris's uncanny knowledge of the human soul is going to keep you fascinated as you watch young Edward grow—in the next instalment

The Exit of Battling Billson

(Continued from page 95)

It was at this tensest of moments that a voice spoke in my ear. "Alf a mo', mister!"

A hand pushed me gently aside. Something large obscured the lights. And Wilberforce Billson, squeezing under the ropes, clambered into the ring.

For the purposes of the historian it was a good thing that for the first few moments after this astounding occurrence a dazed silence held the audience in its grip. Otherwise, it might have been difficult to probe motives and explain underlying causes. I think the spectators were either too surprised to shout, or else they entertained for a few brief seconds the idea that Mr. Billson was the forerunner of a posse of plain-clothes police about to raid the place. At any rate, for a space they were silent, and he was enabled to say his say.

"Fightin'," bellowed Mr. Billson, "ain't right!"

There was an uneasy rustle in the audience. The voice of the referee came thinly, saying "Here! Hi!"

"Sinful," explained Mr. Billson in a voice like a fog-horn.

His oration was interrupted by Mr. Thomas, who was endeavoring to get round him and attack Ukridge. The Battler pushed him gently back.

"Gents," he roared, "I, too, have been a man of voylence! I've struck men in

anger. R. light. Oh.

The rest a startling melted. I nant seath views.

But it i had been attention, to much g Lloyd Tho the strings man who and whose suddenly s expression handed, s the jaw.

Mr. Bill could see physically uncertain turned th Mr. Thom

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In the ministeri decorum the proc first riot decencies Thomas had also Moreove etiquette the conf duced, a in view leaning undergo in the op and one to tell r tremend the patr

In the just con forged Perhaps

anger. R. Yes! But I 'ave seen the light. Oh, my brothers . . ."

The rest of his remarks were lost. With a startling suddenness the frozen silence melted. In every part of the hall indignant seatholders were rising to state their views.

But it is doubtful whether, even if he had been granted a continuance of their attention, Mr. Billson would have spoken to much greater length, for at this moment Lloyd Thomas, who had been gnawing at the strings of his gloves with the air of a man who is able to stand just so much and whose limit has been exceeded, now suddenly shed these obstacles to the freer expression of self and, advancing barehanded, smote Mr. Billson violently on the jaw.

Mr. Billson turned. He was pained, one could see that, but more spiritually than physically. For a moment he seemed uncertain how to proceed. Then he turned the other cheek. The fermenting Mr. Thomas smote that too.

There was no vacillation or uncertainty now about Wilberforce Billson. He plainly considered that he had done all that could reasonably be expected of any pacifist. A man has only two cheeks. He flung up a mast-like arm to block a third blow, countered with an accuracy and spirit which sent his aggressor reeling to the ropes; and then, swiftly removing his coat, went into action with the unregenerate zeal that had made him the petted hero of a hundred water-fronts. And I, tenderly scooping Ukridge up as he dropped from the ring, hurried him away along the corridor to his dressing room. I would have given much to remain and witness a mix-up which, if the police did not interfere, promised to be the battle of the ages, but the claims of friendship are paramount.

Ten minutes later, however, when Ukridge, washed, clothed, and restored as near to the normal as a man may be who has received the full weight of a Lloyd Thomas on a vital spot, was reaching for his mackintosh, there filtered through the intervening doors and passageways a sudden roar so compelling that my sporting spirit declined to ignore it.

"Back in a minute, old man," I said.

And, urged by that ever swelling roar, I cantered back to the hall.

In the interval during which I had been ministering to my stricken friend a certain decorum seemed to have been restored to the proceedings. The conflict had lost its first riotous abandon. Upholders of the decencies of debate had induced Mr. Thomas to resume his gloves, and a pair had also been thrust upon the Battler. Moreover, it was apparent that the etiquette of the tourney now governed the conflict, for rounds had been introduced, and one had just finished as I came in view of the ring. Mr. Billson was leaning back in a chair in one corner, undergoing treatment by his seconds, and in the opposite corner loomed Mr. Thomas; and one sight of the two men was enough to tell me what had caused that sudden tremendous outburst of enthusiasm among the patriots of Llundnno.

In the last stages of the round which had just concluded the native son must have forged ahead in no uncertain manner. Perhaps some chance blow had found its



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way through the Battler's guard, laying him open and defenseless to the final attack. For his attitude, as he sagged in his corner, was that of one whose moments are numbered. His eyes were closed, his mouth hung open and exhaustion was writ large upon him. Mr. Thomas, on the contrary, leaned forward with hands on knees, wearing an impatient look, as if this formality of a rest between rounds irked his imperious spirit.

The gong sounded and he sprang from his seat.

“Laddie,” breathed an anguished voice, and a hand clutched my arm.

I was dimly aware of Ukridge standing beside me. I shook him off. This was no moment for conversation. My whole attention was concentrated on what was happening in the ring.

“I say, laddie!”

Matters in there had reached that tense stage when audiences lose their self-control—when strong men stand on seats and weak men cry “Siddown!” The air was full of that electrical thrill that precedes the knock-out.

And the next moment it came. But it was not Lloyd Thomas who delivered it. From some mysterious reservoir of vitality Wilberforce Billson, the pride of Bermondsey, who an instant before had been reeling under his antagonist's blows like a stricken hulk before a hurricane, produced that one last punch that wins battles. Up it came, whizzing straight to its mark, a stupendous, miraculous upper-cut which caught Mr. Thomas on the angle of the jaw just as he lurched forward to complete his task. It was the last word. Anything milder Llundndno's favorite son might have borne with fortitude, for his was a teak-like frame impervious to most things short of dynamite; but this was final. It left no avenue for argument or evasion. Lloyd Thomas spun around once in a complete circle, dropped his hands and sank slowly to the ground.

There was one wild shout from the audience, and then a solemn hush fell. And in this hush Ukridge's voice spoke once more in my ear.

“I say, laddie, that blighter Previn has bolted with every penny of the receipts!”

The little sitting room of Number Seven Caerleon Street was very quiet and gave the impression of being dark. This was because there is so much of Ukridge and he takes fate's blows so hardly that, when anything goes wrong, his gloom seems to fill a room like a fog. For some minutes after our return from the Oddfellows Hall a gruesome silence had prevailed. Ukridge had exhausted his vocabulary on the subject of Mr. Previn; and as for me, the disaster seemed so tremendous as to render words of sympathy a mere mockery.

“And there's another thing I've just remembered,” said Ukridge hollowly, stirring on his sofa.

“What's that?” I inquired in a bedside voice.

“The bloke Thomas. He was to have got another twenty pounds.”

“He'll hardly claim it, surely?”

“He'll claim it, all right,” said Ukridge moodily. “Except, by Jove,” he went on, a sudden note of optimism in his voice, “that he doesn't know where I am. I was forgetting that. Lucky we legged it



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away from the

“You don't know what I'm making,” Thomas's voice came from the shadows where you were.

“Not likely,” I replied, “reason would be the aged fellow.”

The gentleman who had been so kind to announce and thought I had been formed by Ukridge's father.

“Mr. Previn,” I said, “He's not a man, directly.”

“You'll come for the There was a ‘It's gone!’ ‘What's that?’ ‘The man He's bolted!’

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away from the hall before he could grab me."

"You don't think that Previn, when he was making the arrangements with Thomas's manager, may have mentioned where you were staying?"

"Not likely. Why should he? What reason would he have?"

"Gentleman to see you, sir," crooned the aged female at the door.

The gentleman walked in. It was the man who had come to the dressing room to announce that Thomas was in the ring; and though on that occasion we had not been formally introduced I did not need Ukridge's faint groan to tell me who he was.

"Mr. Previn?" he said. He was a brisk man, direct in manner and speech.

"He's not here," said Ukridge.

"You'll do. You're his partner. I've come for that twenty pounds."

There was a painful silence.

"It's gone," said Ukridge.

"What's gone?"

"The money, dash it. And Previn too. He's bolted."

A hard look came into the other's eyes. Dim as the light was, it was strong enough to show his expression, and that expression was not an agreeable one.

"That won't do," he said in a metallic voice.

"Now, my dear old horse——"

"It's no good trying anything like that on me. I want my money or I'm going to call a policeman. Now then!"

"But, laddie, be reasonable——"

"Made a mistake in not getting it in advance. But now'll do. Out with it!"

"But I keep telling you Previn's bolted!"

"He's certainly bolted," I put in, trying to be helpful.

"That's right, mister," said a voice at the door. "I met 'im sneak' away."

It was Wilberforce Billson. He stood in the doorway diffidently, as one not sure of his welcome. His whole bearing was apologetic. He had a nasty bruise on his left cheek and one of his eyes was closed, but he bore no other signs of his recent conflict.

Ukridge was gazing upon him with bulging eyes. "You met him!" he moaned.

"You actually met him?"

"R," said Mr. Billson. "When I was comin' to the 'all. I seen 'im puttin' all that money into a liddle bag, and then 'e 'urried off."

"Good Lord!" I cried. "Didn't you suspect what he was up to?"

"R," agreed Mr. Billson. "I always knew 'e was a wrong 'un."

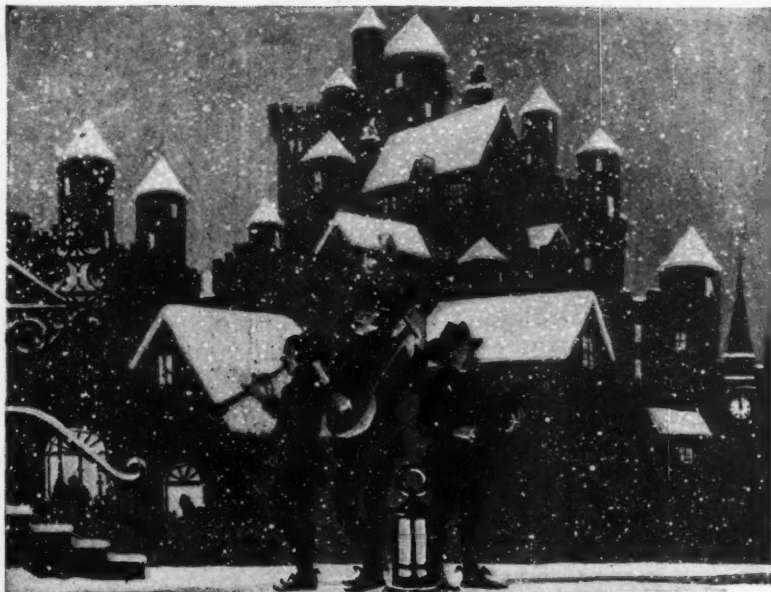
"Then why, you poor woollen-headed fish," bellowed Ukridge, exploding, "why on earth didn't you stop him?"

"I never thought of that," admitted Mr. Billson apologetically. Ukridge laughed a hideous laugh. "I just pushed 'im in the face," proceeded Mr. Billson, "and took the liddle bag away from 'im."

He placed on the table a small, weather-worn suitcase that jingled musically as he moved it; then, with the air of one who dismisses some triviality from his mind, moved to the door.

"'Scuse me, gents," said Battling Billson deprecatingly. "Can't stop. I've got to go and spread the light."

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Persons Unknown

(Continued from page 52)

circumstances of the past three days. But if Bent said that it must be done, why then, it must be done.

She asked her cousin if he had seen or heard from Doyle, but Dick knew nothing of the detective.

"He'll be pretty sick at having missed his chance to hear what Lescœur had to say," said Dick.

Ruth shuddered; to hear someone else utter aloud such a statement shocked her. And yet she had been wishing that Lescœur had given his evidence. We are all callous where our interests are concerned.

They went out upon the porch and Benton started to summon the chauffeur. But Balfour restrained him.

"Gerlach is showing a lot of sense. He's permitting no vehicles of any sort to travel down the road until he's completed his examination. We'll have to walk."

"John's been reading detective stories," said Reverly. His humor brought a faint smile to the lips of his wife. The idea of fat old John Gerlach acting as a sleuth was too ridiculous to be seriously entertained.

Yet when, fifty yards down the road, they rounded a bend and saw a group of people before them, she reconstructed her opinion of the good-natured Sheriff, who until recent years had run a summer boarding-house and a livery stable.

For Gerlach had roped off the road on either side of the spot where, Ruth correctly assumed, the body of Lescœur had been found. For a space of twenty yards in either direction the road was kept inviolate from the wheels of motors and, so far as was possible, from the feet of human beings.

A constable, un-uniformed but wearing a badge indicative of his authority, warned the three newcomers to the scene to follow the rough grass bordering the road. They did so, and Gerlach greeted them a moment later.

Ruth, responding to the Sheriff's friendly greeting, was relieved to find that the body of Lescœur had been removed. The dust was smooth near where Gerlach stood, as though some heavy object had lain there for some time. Gerlach, following her glance, nodded.

"That's where he was found, Miss Ruth," he said.

"You're taking good care of the scene, John," said Reverly.

Gerlach colored self-consciously. "I'd never thought of it myself, Mr. Reverly," he admitted. "But there's a gentleman down here, a Mr. Sanderson, of the Bryan Detective Agency, who's been in to see me several times lately—he's investigating some bootlegging—and he happened to be at my office this morning when news was brought me of the murder. There he is over there." He pointed at a tall, thin man of undistinguished appearance who stood on the other side of the road. "He sort of took charge and made me do the thing right. Before we moved the body we took photographs from every angle. And he's been examining the marks in the road."

"What has he found out?" asked young Dick eagerly.

"Well, he found footprints of three men. And the marks of one automobile. At

least, according to the car went off at night. Of course, before, but

"How can it be?" "Maybe Gerlach."

For Sanderson, Ruth noticed the spot where the car was not.

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least, according to what he says, one car went up and down this road last night. Others may have been on the road before, but only one since dark last night."

"How can he tell that?" demanded Dick.

"Maybe he'll tell you himself," replied Gerlach.

For Sanderson was approaching them. Ruth noticed that he circled well around the spot where the body had been lying. And as he came nearer she saw that while he was not a particularly impressive person, he nevertheless had a shrewd air. His light eyes were set too closely together to permit him to seem frank; his nose was sharply pointed; his mouth was a narrow slot and lent his otherwise weak face an air of grimness. For the rest, he was sandy-haired, thick-wristed and big-knuckled. Not a person one would be apt to look at a second time, and yet if one did cast a second glance his way one would be apt to decide that he mattered a trifle more than one had thought at first.

He acknowledged Gerlach's introductions courteously enough. But Ruth thought that his glance toward her husband and herself was a bit more appraising than polite usage sanctioned.

Gerlach repeated Dick's question.

Sanderson smiled mirthlessly. "At about nine o'clock last night there was quite a heavy fog. It lasted a couple of hours. It sort of moistened the ground. An automobile that passed along this road during or shortly after the fog would leave heavier traces in the dust than cars that passed earlier or later. I find marks of a car that came down this road between nine and eleven, or thereabouts. It came down the road and went back, or it went up the road and came down. I can't tell which, just yet."

"I can," said Reverly. "I drove down the road from my house back around the bend"—he nodded over his shoulder—"at about half past ten last night."

"So?" Sanderson eyed him with interest. "See anything unusual?"

Reverly shook his head. "Not a thing."

"What time did you say it was?"

"About half past ten," repeated Reverly.

"You aren't sure?" asked the detective.

"Not positive," admitted Reverly. "But it was about that time. Doctor Carey perhaps could place it accurately."

"The druggist?" asked Sanderson.

"I went down to his store to get some aspirin for a headache," explained Reverly. "He'll probably remember the exact hour, for he was about to close his shop when I arrived."

Sanderson looked at Ruth. "Perhaps you remember the exact time?"

"No, I don't," replied Ruth. "I fell asleep before my husband returned, and I didn't look at a clock when he left."

Sanderson nodded. "Well, I only wanted to find out the hour of the crime. Perhaps I can't do it anyway, but we'll know, when I've talked to Doctor Carey, the hour not earlier than which it could have occurred. For the man was killed where we found his body. Your car have bright lights?" he asked Reverly.

"No. Something is wrong with the headlights. I used dimmers."

Sanderson whistled. "Then the body might have been lying on the road while you drove by? In that case the time of your trip to the drug store wouldn't prove anything. The man might have



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been killed some time before that, and yet you wouldn't have seen him with only dimmers on your car."

Reverly shook his head. "I should think I'd have seen him. Still, on a dark night, in the fog—"

"I should think the tracks of the car would show," suggested Dick eagerly. "If the body obliterated the marks of the tires, that would prove that the body wasn't there when Bent drove by."

"Mr. Reverly kept on the south side of the road going and coming," declared Sanderson. "The body, as the marks show you, lay on the north side."

"Where is the body now?" asked Reverly.

"In Carey's undertaking rooms," replied Sanderson. The druggist was also Beau-lieu's undertaker. "Want to see him? Think you know him?"

"If he is François Lesœur—"

"I found letters on him that make me believe that's who he was," interrupted John Gerlach.

"He left my house last night not long before his death," said Reverly. "And he was afraid of being killed."

"Did he say why?" Sanderson demanded.

"He did. He said that he knew the gang who had murdered Jim Armstrong, and said that they would kill him."

"How did he happen to come to see you?" asked Sanderson.

"He was looking for Patrick Doyle and thought that he might be at my house," Reverly told him.

"Did he tell you the names of Armstrong's murderers?" inquired the detective.

"He said that names meant nothing, especially what he called phoney names. He said that one man was named Mark Harrington and the other Luther Sterling, but that those names were assumed. He refused to talk further than that. He said that he would talk only to Doyle."

"Did he think that he was in immediate danger?" asked Sanderson.

"He seemed to fear that he might have been followed. Yet he would not spend the night with us."

"Too bad he didn't," Gerlach commented.

Sanderson made an imperceptible movement of his shoulders. "He might have been killed just the same." He looked searchingly at Reverly. "You can't think of anything else that he said?"

"No," said Reverly.

The sandy-haired man shifted his glance to Ruth. "You remember anything else?"

"Except that there were hundreds of thousands of dollars of crooked money involved," she replied.

"How did he happen to mention that?"

Reverly replied for his wife. "I was trying to get him to tell us what he knew. I said that we might see Doyle before he did, and that it might be of value for us to be able to tell Doyle in advance whatever facts Lesœur was possessed of. He replied that he wasn't telling anyone except Doyle what he knew. I remember exactly what he said. 'For all I know, you might be Mark Harrington.' That's what he said. My wife remarked that that was absurd. He replied that it was absurd discovering at this late date that Armstrong was murdered. Then he said that when hundreds of thousands of dollars were involved nothing was absurd."



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Cosmopo

"So he the Harrington?"

"Of course," Vint intended to say. "Doyle if he simply overcaution."

"I see," surprised at Armstrong—had been

"Of course," Pat Doyle three times. He told her Mr. Sanderson.

"Oh, yes," "Suppose you me now, Mr. sure that who called

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"So he thought that you might be Mark Harrington?" said Sanderson.

"Of course he didn't," cried Ruth indignantly. "Would he have told us that he intended confessing everything to Mr. Doyle if he had meant that? He was simply overly cautious, and explaining his caution."

"I see," said Sanderson. "Were you surprised at learning from him that Mr. Armstrong—he was your fiancé, wasn't he?—had been murdered?"

"Of course not," interjected Dick. "Pat Doyle has been to see her two or three times. He told her everything. He told her that he was helping you out, Mr. Sanderson."

"Oh, yes, of course," said the detective. "Suppose you come down to Carey's with me now, Mr. Reverly. We want to make sure that the murdered man is the man who called on you last night."

"Do I have to go?" asked Ruth.

Sanderson shook his head. "Of course not, Mrs. Reverly. Not just now, at any rate. Of course, later on—we'll cross that bridge when we come to it. Sure you can't remember the time your husband left you last night? And you were asleep when he came back? Well, well, Doctor Carey can place the hour for us."

"I'll be back in a little while, Ruth," promised Reverly. And so he left her.

CHAPTER XIII

SHE DID not linger at the scene of the tragedy, to which all the morbidly curious of Beaulieu were being attracted. She had gone reluctantly with Bent and Dick to see John Gerlach, and now that her further testimony was not required at the moment, she made haste to return to her house.

Mary and Clara were standing on the front porch, leaning over the railing, discussing excitedly with Mike the chauffeur the tragedy that was to change Beaulieu from a gossipy little summer resort into the center of attention of the newspaper-reading public. But discipline, or a colorable imitation, reasserted itself at Ruth's approach. With a flutter of petticoats, the two servants disappeared into the house. Mike sheepishly held his ground.

"Pretty exciting, ain't it, Mrs. Reverly?"

"Indeed it is," said Ruth.

"That's the trouble with letting foreigners into the country, Mrs. Reverly."

Ruth stared at him in amazement. "I don't think I follow you, Mike," she said.

The chauffeur shook his bullet head gravely. "Knifing, I mean, Mrs. Reverly. This Lescœur wasn't an American. He was a French-Canadian. Chances are the guys that bumped him off was foreigners, too. You see, when a good American croaks another merchant he does it with a gun or a cl— in good clean fashion. It's only foreigners that use knives. I'm ag'in 'em."

Mike's logic brought another smile to the lips of Ruth. But it vanished instantly.

"How do you know the dead man was a French-Canadian?" she asked.

"Well, I've been down to the village this morning. I heard people mention Lescœur's name, and I recognized it. Sure he was a French-Canadian. And a tough egg, too, Mrs. Reverly."

"What did you know about him?"

"Nothing good, and that's the honest

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truth," said Mike. "I'd seen Lesœur battin' round Southfield, and the gang he traveled with looked mighty hard to me."

"Do you know any of them?" Mike scratched his head. "I wouldn't say as I was intimate with them. But I know Pete Curlew. He runs the Curlew House. A cheap hotel, and since prohibition came in Pete's made more money out of his bar than he ever did before. Not that I do any drinking, Mrs. Reverly, but I hear the talk that's goin' round. Curlew's place is the stamping ground of all the swell bootleggers in Southfield."

"Was Lesœur a bootlegger?" asked Ruth. "I wouldn't say that, because I don't know," replied Mike. "But there's a gang in Southfield that prohibition's caused. Gamblers and stick-up men—"

"What are they?" she interrupted.

"Highwaymen," he explained. "Men that wouldn't stop short of murder. The kind of men that killed Lesœur last night. I tell you, Mrs. Reverly, a lad that monkeys with the law is liable to find himself training with a hard crew. This Lesœur may not have been a bad actor himself, but there's truth in that old saying about a man being judged by the company he keeps."

Not for Mike's philosophy, but for facts that he might know, Ruth would have encouraged his garrulity. The mystery of Lesœur's death was inextricably entangled with the mystery of the death of Jim Armstrong, and any facts relating to Lesœur held a double interest. But Clara came to the door and called to her that she was wanted on the telephone, and she postponed further questioning for the moment.

Rumor travels swiftly, and when the rumor is of bad news its movements seem instantaneous. Mrs. Lesœur could hardly have heard of her husband's death sooner had she been present when the body was found. Before a messenger from the Southfield police force had called at her apartment to acquaint her with her husband's death, she had heard it from a neighbor who possessed a telephone. All this she blurted out to Ruth.

"And I tell you, Mrs. Reverly, that I went into a dead faint. I only come out of it a few minutes ago, and I rang you right up. I don't believe it's true. I just can't believe it. There must be some mistake, and I rang you up to see."

Gently, Ruth told her that the neighbor and the policeman were not mistaken. Like many other people who collapse when there is hope, but whose forces of resistance rally and give them courage when hope is gone, Mrs. Lesœur became brave now. Her voice became firmer, clearer.

"Thank you, Mrs. Reverly," she said. "I'm sorry to have bothered you." That she should apologize for having "bothered" Ruth would have been mirth-provoking had the girl been less genuinely sorry for the woman.

For somehow Ruth found a likeness between the case of Mrs. Lesœur and her own position. Mrs. Lesœur had had doubts of the probity of her husband, yet it had been patent to Ruth yesterday, and the day before, that the angular, seemingly passionless woman had loved her husband. And she, Ruth Reverly, even in those hideous moments that followed Bent's denial of ownership of the broken cuff link, had not ceased to love the man to

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whom she was married. And danger, threatening Lescœur, had caught up with him. Did not Ruth suspect that danger threatened Bent? Was it entirely impossible that it should catch up with her husband?

She found out that Agnes was still with her aunt and asked if there was anything that Mrs. Lescœur wished Agnes to do, or if there was anything that Ruth herself could do.

"The policeman tells me that I ought to go over to Beaulieu. He says that the police over there might want to question me. And of course I can't be certain that it's Francis until I've seen him."

Ruth could find nothing of comfort to offer in support of Mrs. Lescœur's hope, but she told her to come to the Reverly cottage after her visit to the Beaulieu officials. Then she hung up and went out to question Mike.

But she had no opportunity to test her detective ability just now, for Mike had disappeared. Doubtless he had gone down the road to gossip with the natives. So Ruth returned to the house.

In the little office on the ground floor she tried to concentrate on domestic matters. Indeed, for half an hour she managed to do so very well, but then it crept into her consciousness that Reverly was rather slow in returning to the house. And at just about the time when his delay was beginning to assume an ominous aspect, she heard footsteps on the front porch. She dropped her fountain pen, with which she was writing a check for the grocer, and ran out into the living room to meet, as she thought, Reverly.

But it was Patrick H. Doyle who faced her as she threw open the front door. Her disappointment caused her to utter a faint cry, and Doyle patted his cravat self-consciously. He took her cry as a tribute of admiration.

"Oh!" said Ruth blankly. She recovered herself. "I thought you were my husband."

"I suppose I ought to feel flattered, Mrs. Reverly," said Doyle. "I would if I were the sort of man that could be flattered by any mistake made by a woman. I believe in being frank, Mrs. Reverly. I can talk as gracefully as any man on earth if I want to, and I could say something very pretty about your mistake. But I don't choose to. I have such pronounced views on marriage that I never permit the subject to be treated with levity in my presence."

Astounded, Ruth gasped, "You don't believe in marriage?"

"That's exactly the trouble I find with most people, especially women," said Doyle. "They assume that they can gather from one sentence of mine what the next one is going to be. If they'd stop to think, they'd realize how absurd that is. Believe in marriage? Certainly, for everyone in the world except myself. But it would never do for Patrick H. Doyle. His clear mentality must never be bothered by anything save his career. Can you imagine Patrick H. Doyle having to get up in the middle of the night to walk the baby? The sheer ridiculousness of such a situation should appeal to you immediately, Mrs. Reverly."

"It does," said Ruth, chokingly. But Doyle mistook her difficulty of speech for embarrassment caused by his rebuke.

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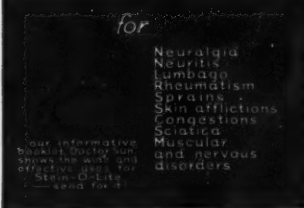
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"It's all right. Think no more about it," he said gallantly.

"I won't," said Ruth. Exactly what she was to think no more about she couldn't quite understand, but then she couldn't quite understand anything about Patrick H. Doyle.

"John Gerlach and Sanderson wish you to come down to the selectmen's office, if you will," said Doyle.

"Of course," said Ruth.

On the way she questioned Doyle. But the detective was reticent, a strange mood for him to be in, so she thought. He had accomplished very little since seeing her yesterday, he said. And he agreed with her that it was extremely unfortunate that he had not been present when Lesœur called last night. He questioned her closely as to everything that had been said or done by the murdered man, and she was still answering his questions when they reached the low frame building which housed the seat of government of Beaulieu.

Ruth entered the shabby office and looked around for her husband. He was not there, and she asked Gerlach where he was. Sanderson answered for the Sheriff.

"I've found out, Mrs. Reverly, that the best way to get at the facts is to question people separately. Your husband's in the inside office, and you can see him as soon as we get through talking. You see, if I ask him a question, and you're here, and he isn't quite sure of his answer, he'll turn to you—get me? In that case what I'll find out is what you both think as a couple, not what each of you thinks as an individual. Am I clear?"

Ruth shrugged. She would be glad to answer any question at all, and told him so.

"All right," said Sanderson. "Suppose you begin by telling us everything that happened, beginning with Lesœur's arrival at your house last night."

Ruth was silent a moment. Sanderson perhaps misinterpreted her pause.

"There might be some little thing about Lesœur that you noticed which your husband didn't see at all, so don't be afraid to tell us everything."

"Afraid?" exclaimed Ruth.

Sanderson colored faintly. "I mean, don't be afraid of wasting my time. Don't skip a thing because it seems unimportant to you."

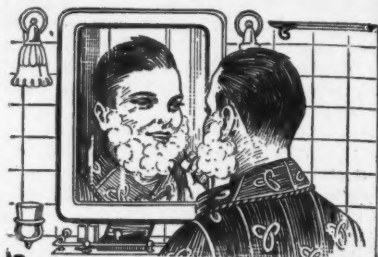
"I won't," said Ruth stiffly. She did not like the attitude of Sanderson. Nevertheless, because she knew it was her duty, she recounted last night's experience in detail. When she had finished Sanderson pursed his lips and nodded approvingly.

"Very good indeed, Mrs. Reverly. I wouldn't ask for a clearer, more concise statement from anyone. It checks up absolutely with what your husband told us occurred while he was in the house."

Despite the complimentary tone of the man, Ruth thought that he lingered with unnecessary emphasis on his last few words. And while she stared at him in surprise, that cunning expression on his face became more pronounced.

"But just now, Mrs. Reverly, we won't bother to check up your story with your husband's, although I think they match perfectly. I'm more interested in hearing you tell me exactly what you've been doing since last Monday morning."

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her face and a chill sweeping over her flesh. "Last Monday?" she whispered.

"Yes. Beginning with when Mr. Frank Lacy called upon you. Suppose you tell us why, when a man tells you that your fiancé did not die an accidental death but was murdered, you did not detain him, made no effort to communicate with the police."

She turned anxious eyes to Doyle. But he was not looking at her. He was staring at Sanderson, and there was a queer light in his eyes, those sunken, smoldering eyes, which she could not interpret.

"I do not recognize your right to put such a question to me, Mr. Sanderson," she said.

"Oh, you don't have to answer me." His tone was suddenly insolent. "Any more than you have to admit that this is your property."

"This" was a silver-handled but steel-bladed game knife. The initials R. B. were engraved in a monogram upon the handle. It was part of the set of silver that had been her father's wedding present to her. "Yours?" asked Sanderson.

She nodded assent, shuddering as she saw the stains upon the sharp curved blade. It looked like a miniature scimitar, and its resemblance to that ancient weapon of the Moors was enhanced by the dried blood upon it.

"I thought so," said Sanderson. "It's also the knife which was found sticking in the back of Lescœur." He stared at her threateningly. "Now will you tell us about Mr. Lacy's visit? And it would be well to speak the truth, for Lacy has already testified. He is under arrest as a material witness in the murder of Lescœur."

She turned to Doyle. "You can tell him, Mr. Doyle, that I told you all about Lacy."

"Mr. Doyle is not in charge of this matter today. I am. I have been retained by Mr. Gerlach, acting for the village of Beaulieu, to investigate Lescœur's murder. But we'll waive the Lacy matter for a moment. Mrs. Reverly, you said to me earlier this morning that you did not know the exact hour when your husband returned home from the drug store last night. Is that so?"

"What do you mean?" she asked.

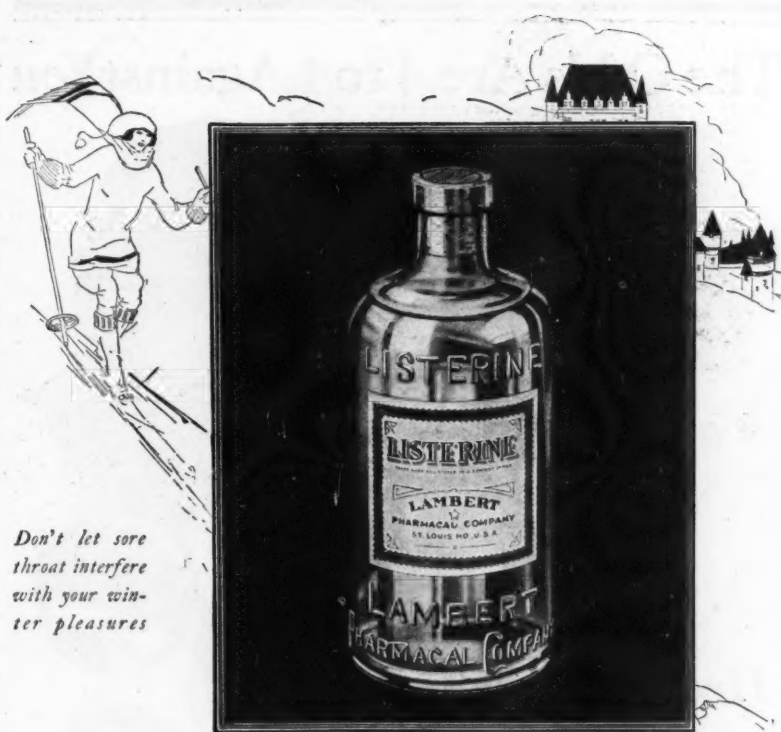
"I mean that I have arrested your husband on the charge of murdering Lescœur last night, with this knife which you see before you."

The charge was too absurd. She turned to Doyle. And then her face, to which the blood had returned in anger, went white again. For Doyle's eyes met hers with a gleam which could only be of triumph.

So he had deceived her! He had pretended to believe in her husband's innocence of the murder of Armstrong in order to win admissions from her. He had conspired with this man Sanderson to entrap Bent. Why had she ever believed in him? Had anything that she had said aroused Doyle's suspicion? But what did Doyle's suspicions matter? This charge was so ridiculously false.

And then some demon of doubt whispered into her ear that the lethal weapon which had slain Lescœur had come from her silver chest, and that her husband had not returned last night until after she had fallen asleep.

If you think Ruth Reverly is in the midst of a tangled mystery, wait till you see how much more baffling it can get—next month



Don't let sore throat interfere with your winter pleasures

Check sore throat *this way*

SORE throat is a nuisance. It usually comes at just the time you want to feel your best—maybe when there is a big party scheduled; a skating trip tobogganing or something else.

Besides the inconvenience, sore throat may often be a danger signal of some more serious ill to follow. Many illnesses have their beginning with disease germs that may enter the system through the mouth and throat.

There is one simple, safe and pleasant way to guard against troubles of this kind—by using Listerine systematically as a mouth wash and gargle.

For half a century this valuable preparation has been recognized and rec-

ommended by physicians as a safe household antiseptic.

Moreover, when you use Listerine this way you effectually combat that other embarrassment that so many people are guilty of, both socially and in business—halitosis (the medical term meaning unpleasant breath).

When you make Listerine a regular part of your daily toilet routine, you know your breath is right and you know that you are guarding yourself against troubles that may start with throat infection. It is a good thing always to have it handy in your bathroom. Listerine has dozens of other uses; note circular with each bottle.—Lambert Pharmacal Company, Saint Louis, U. S. A.

LISTERINE



—the safe antiseptic

The Odds Are 4 to 1 Against You

Heed Nature's Warning —Bleeding Gums

Don't gamble with your teeth and health. You have far too much at stake. More, the odds are too heavy against you.

Teeth-destroying, health-sapping Pyorrhea strikes four persons out of every five that pass the age of forty. And thousands younger, too. The chances are 4 to 1 it will strike you unless you are vigilantly on guard.

Heed nature's warning when she gives it. Bleeding gums are the danger signal. Act at once. Don't wait. For Pyorrhea works fast. The tender gums recede. The teeth loosen, drop out or are lost through extraction. Pus-pockets form at the roots and often flood the system with infection.

Go immediately to your dentist for teeth and mouth inspection. Brush your teeth, twice daily, with Forhan's For the Gums. This healing, time-tested dentifrice, when used in time and used consistently, will prevent Pyorrhea or check its progress.

Forhan's For the Gums is the formula of R. J. Forhan, D. D. S. It will keep your teeth clean and white, your gums firm and healthy. It is pleasant to the taste. At all druggists, 35c and 60c.

Forhan's

FOR THE GUMS

More than a tooth paste—it checks Pyorrhea

Formula of R. J. Forhan, D. D. S.
Forhan Company, New York
Forhan's, Limited, Montreal



Goin' On Fourteen

(Continued from page 23)

that shelf its entire length—with me standing there, as you might say, just absolutely so dumbfounded I couldn't make a move—why, about that time it butted into a cross-brace, and with that it seemed to sort of hunch up and right quick stretch out again, the same as a chunk of rubber, and next minute it'd fell out and landed on top of that other showcase and cracked it across the top, too, and then dove off of there and lit on the floor and capered round a little bit more in a kind of a general direction, as you might say.

"Then it seemed to get organized and skedaddled out of the side door, tail first, like a crawfish—only no crawfish ever traveled as fast as this varmint did—and was gone like a flash; and me left here with my mouth hanging wide open, and up to my knee joints, pretty near it, in ruin and destruction. The whole thing happened so quick that if it hadn't 'a' been for this here mess of busted lamps and smashed lamp chimneys all over the floor and the holes in both them showcases and all, I could almost 'a' sworn it was a dream, I could so . . .

And oh yes, then, the next thing, old Connors was letting out the blamdest squall ever you heard in your born life. It seems he hadn't waked up till then—just snoozed along right through all that excitement and racket. How he did it, though, beats me!"

He didn't. As a matter of truth, the Major already was rousing, even before the assailant backed under his chair and rose between his knees. His sound somnambulance slowly capitulated to the crashing tumult behind him. Fretfully he raised a drowsy eyelid, then stretched it and its mate in a stricken glare. It was not well that any aged man rudely should be summoned from the depths of peaceful sleep to be menaced and attacked, on no provocation, by such an incredible apparition. The Major was well acquainted with cats, and naturally he knew tin cans, but this thing that was part of it can and the rest of it cat—this masquerading monstrosity which came hurtling up under his whiskers and affixed itself to his shirt front and set sharp claws in him—this was too much. With a shriek of horror and the words, "Great Lawd Ermighty, let loose o' me!" he plucked the clinging hybrid from his bosom and cast it afar and, with one splendid spring, reached the edge of the sidewalk.

Mr. Hagadorn, himself profoundly startled, hurried to his front window at exactly the peak moment for beholding Major Connors when that gentleman, having run a few paces briskly, recovered himself and dashed back and with a right goodly swing of a good right leg aimed a kick at the recoiling enemy. Up to the hour of his demise, the old warrior nourished for all cats a deep hatred which dated from one memorable September day. People knew it must date from this day because this also was the day when his disability payments ceased. With gladness in his heart, Mr. Hagadorn attended to the latter detail.

From this point, namely, Pettus's store, the Custer family's cat was seen no more until she reappeared over on Oak Street on the other side of the square, which was



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where the meeting with Mrs. Slop Johnson occurred. With apparent felonious intent, she launched herself straight at Mrs. Slop Johnson's head just as that elderly lady issued from the Cumberland Presbyterian minister's side-gate carrying a heavy and dripping wooden bucket in either hand.

A word explanatory here is needed as to the personality of Mrs. Slop Johnson and her calling. Her first name, which she herself did not use but nearly everybody else did, was derived from the business she followed. In the final decades of the century last past she constituted the nearest approach to a dependable sanitary department that this town knew. Her mission in life was raising hogs. To provide them with sustenance she toured the community, acquiring the table leavings which grateful housekeepers had saved up for her, and bore them away to her populous sties. Single-handed, she diligently pursued this life work of hers. Mrs. Slop Johnson was by way of being a social recluse, anyhow. We need not dwell on that point; it is obvious.

The day's doings were well along; the regular clientele had been visited at their homes. A battery of eight barrels, mounted and wedged in a double row upon the bed of her rickety wagon, were filled almost but not quite to the overflowing measure. These were tight barrels but they lacked heads or covers to them. She would add the offerings from the parsonage kitchen and then, well content and with a brimming load, would drive her mule team homeward. This was her intention until something interposed.

Once already, some hours earlier, Mrs. Johnson had encountered a certain salmon can. Any impression it then made upon her mind had been but a passing one. She was not prepared to encounter it again, and still less prepared to find it traveling now in the company of a strange four-legged furry black creature, as a crown for the rearward-turned prow of that creature. Least of all was she prepared to dodge it as, legged, bodied, tailed and endowed with vigorous life, it sped toward her. She dodged, though.

On past her, beyond the gutter, two stout mules stood with sprung front knees and heads down and hides flinching against the pestersome flies. It was the near mule that chiefly suffered by reason of the ensuing complication. Put yourself in that mule's place and then ask yourself whether you are one to judge him harshly. Suppose you were a mule, a mule feeling in tune with a placid and harmonious world and drowsy besides, and all of a sudden, with no prior warning whatsoever, a whirling, boxing, daunting, strange dark animal with a bright circlet weirdly enclosing its head, and accompanied by a sharp metallic clattering, descended out of nowhere between your hind legs and instantly climbed up one of those legs, sinking sharp talons into you and uttering fierce stifled outcries as it climbed. What would you do? Yes? Well, that is precisely what this other mule did. And, perhaps through sympathy, his team brother went along with him.

First, though, the bedeviled near mule, being a true mule, must kick up behind with all his might and main; and the foe which has so affrighted him and now so painfully plagues him goes floating swiftly away on an involuntary air journey of



Are women growing younger?

YOUNG, active grandmothers! Young mothers! Young professional women! Everywhere you find the spirit of youth in modern womanhood.

A glance into women's clubs today—into homes, offices and social gatherings—reveals this new type of woman—the woman who enjoys good health, who is schooled in modern hygienic ideas and who stays young.

Prevention of illness is the secret. Every illness leaves an indelible imprint on the constitution—and on the face. Like continual traffic wearing deeper and deeper ruts in a road, so each illness weakens the system, leaving greater susceptibility to the next attack.

"Most illnesses are the result of bacterial infection," says the chief woman's physician of a large New York hospital. "For this reason, I firmly advocate regular hy-

gienic cleansing of an antiseptic nature for women. It is as important as regular brushing of the teeth."

Feminine antiseptic cleansing

MODERN women are coming to realize, more and more generally, the importance of this protective cleansing. Not mere soap-and-water cleanliness, but regular feminine cleansing with an effective antiseptic. It is the most important hygienic rule for preserving that greatest of feminine charms—youthfulness.

For this cleansing, "Lysol"

Disinfectant is the antiseptic recommended by prominent physicians everywhere, because it is both *safe* and *effective*. It is neutral. It contains no free alkali nor free acid. Used in proper solution with water, "Lysol" is non-caustic and does not irritate the delicate tissues.

All drug stores sell "Lysol" Disinfectant.

Use "Lysol" as an antiseptic solution
One-half teaspoonful to one quart water

For feminine hygiene
When baby comes
For wounds
For the bathroom
For the sickroom

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Two teaspoonfuls to one quart water

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For floors, cellars, dark corners

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Canadian Agents: Harold F. Ritchie & Co., Limited, 10 McCaul St., Toronto

COMPLETE directions for use are in every package. The genuine "Lysol" Disinfectant is put up only in brown glass bottles containing 3, 7 or 16 ounces; each bottle is packed in a yellow carton. The 3 ounce bottle also comes in a special non-breakable package for travelers. Insist upon obtaining genuine "Lysol" Disinfectant.

Lysol
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Per foot Man

approximately forty feet. It strikes on the hard roadway, tinned end first, and under such impact the battered can splits open along a side seam. Its recent captive, once more freed and unhooded, and, despite all that she has gone through and up against, not physically disabled—as the reader, we trust, will be glad to learn—but, of course, nervously much shaken, darts into a handy weed patch and vanishes out of our view and this narrative.

Fire Chief James Collister—"Big Jimmy"—was sitting in front of Number 1 Engine House, playing seven-up at ten cents a corner and five cents for every setback with some reckless somebody who should have known better than to play seven-up against him unless for the fun of being beaten, when out of the south he heard the runaways coming.

The Chief was a man of brawn and of versatile parts, as well. Not only did he head the paid department and play the best game of seven-up in the municipality, but he had other specialties, such, for instance, as checkers and judging live stock on the hoof and trimming the ears and tails of terriers and diagnosing the ailments of horses. But stopping runaways was his favorite side-line.

He sprang up, kicking over his chair, and ran out into the street and set himself just beyond the curbing. Oak Street no longer was slumberous. Roused by the clatter of eight pelting hoofs and four whirling wheels, residents hastened to their front doors to watch through the choking dust a frantic team of mules lunge by, with a laden wagon careening and lurching drunkenly at their heels.

Big Jimmy poised in a practised crouch. He made an admirable picture of readiness and resolution, with his official blue flannel shirt opened down as far as its third button to show his hairy chest, his elbows out, his competent hands spread for the clutch at throat-latch or snaffle, his sinewy legs tensed to start their forward leap at exactly the properly spaced moment.

The runaways came tearing on, holding to a straight, unswerving course. They were almost upon him—they were upon him—and now he leaped. But even as his toes bent to leave the earth, Chief Collister's good angel looked his way. In that infinitesimal but providential nick of time he recognized the foreparts of those onrushing shapes, realized what it was he was about to stop, discerned correctly the nature of that which churned and spouted and sprayed from all those open barrels. He leaped—with a reverse action, rearward, so that he was not completely deluged but only splattered upon, here and there. But he put his shoulders right through the show-window of Mrs. M. Olin's millinery shop adjoining Headquarters, where a special display for the approaching fall opening had just been completed.

At the risk of anticipating a climax it nevertheless is incumbent upon us to break the sequence of progressive developments and to precede the runaway to the setting of its final and culminating scene. Let us hurry on, then, down to the river front.

On a hot day the coolest place in town and the most favored was in the narrow opening to the right of the office entrance, in the west-elevation of the new



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Continuous treatment while the patient enjoys undisturbed rest.

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The household remedy for bronchial troubles
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ice factory—new then, but decayed and crumbling now—which opening led back along a short passage to a wider, windowless ground-floor chamber beneath the freezing vats. This inner place was in the shape of a square bottle; its one outer vent was the neck of the bottle and through it, along a steep chute, the big crystalline blocks slid down to a low platform just outside, to take on cargoes. From the interior of the congealing plant gusts of chilled air blew down to create a refreshing and unfailing draftiness.

Right here, within the bottle mouth, sat a half-dozen of the elder statesmen, prominent men, leaders of affairs—such men as General Litchen and Judge Boone Crawford and the Reverend Mr. Crumbaugh. They had been discussing the Money Devils of Wall Street and the Tariff and other evils of a Republican misrule. They now were discussing the mistakes of Braxton Bragg. Presently they would cut a watermelon.

General Litchen, late of Forrest's staff, was speaking. A great clamor, drawing nearer, caused him to break off and peer out of his retreat. Around the corner of Jefferson Street and into Front Street whirled a runaway team. The runaways headed straight in the direction of the delivery exit. In alarm, the General and his confreres shrank well back within the shelter of their refuge, awaiting the crash against the building.

No crash came but something else came. For, just when a collision seemed inevitable, the galloping animals shied off toward the middle of the road. A front wheel caught on an outer corner of the platform. The wagon bed heaved, buckled, turned completely over, and, with a mighty *plop* of liquid matters and a mushy dull thud of more solid parts and a splintering of soaked oaken staves, it deposited its contents, barrels and all, precisely under and across the low-arched opening. No civil engineer—presuming that any civil engineer would deal with such materials—could have blockaded that exit more perfectly. The elder statesmen were sealed in; you couldn't even see them over the intervening barrier.

This done, the mules mutually agreed to call it a day. Losing spirit, they dragged the capsized wreck of their wagon a few rods farther and slowed down to a trot; presently they halted and soon were cropping herbage at the top of the city wharf. Few observed them, though. Popular notice was concentrated upon the elder statesmen, or rather, upon the spot where they last had been seen. They remained invisible but their voices were heard, speaking in tones and with words which gave added zest to the public interest—especially General Litchen's words. He seemed to forget that a minister of the Gospel was present.

Still, his patience, and that of his companions, did undergo sore strain; they had to wait so long for deliverance from captivity. It was hard to find volunteers—even paid volunteers—for the task of digging them out. It must have been cold in there where they were, and the air close, too; one gathered as much by what, from time to time, the prisoners were saying. Many heard what was said. Long before the rescue had been accomplished they had quite a large audience. Citizens came from all over the lower

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NO man who smokes LUCKY STRIKES ever feels that he has smoked too much. He is satisfied but never sated.

He finds that the Toasted Process produces a flavor mild enough to be continuously enjoyed.

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Mary Garden—This gracious scent suggests a vivid, glowing personality.

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business district and stood about and harkened, all wearing on their faces the pleased look which a street crowd anywhere always does wear when somebody else is in trouble or embarrassment.

It must be nearly three o'clock. How time dragged along! John C. Calhoun Custer Junior arose laggingly from his place hard by the new acting bar. He yawned and went and leaned with weariness against one of its uprights. An abiding sense of the disenchantment which comes with advancing age was heavy upon him.

"Oh, shuckin's," he said once again. "Seems like nothin' ever happens round this dag-gone town when a feller gits to be goin' on fourteen."

A laugh not only on the lips but away down inside where the memories of your own childhood are—Irvin Cobb's "Goin' on Fourteen" story for January

Never The Twain Shall Meet

(Continued from page 38)

of time and the girl was young and comely. Why, then, dally until she should become a hag? In his own mind Sooeey Wan was fully convinced, from certain signs, that his Mongolian gods looked with favor upon the match, and since practically all of the fire crackers had exploded, the old heathen was certain that the devils of bad luck which might or might not have interfered had been thoroughly exorcised.

To all of this harangue Dan gave a stereotyped reply: "Sooeey Wan, you are an interfering and impudent old Chinaman. Keep your nose out of my private affairs."

Whereupon Sooeey Wan would fairly screech: "Missa Dan, wha' for you play damn fool? Boy, you klazy! Sure you klazy!"

When Dan discovered that he would have to mark time until the convent in Sacramento should be released from quarantine, he pleaded the urgent necessity for an unavoidable absence from the city and sought to start his offensive campaign against Tamea's steadily mounting influence over him by going away for a two weeks' fishing and painting excursion in Southern California. Tamea was somewhat insulted because he did not invite her to accompany him; he ignored her little pout, kissed her tenderly and fled. And he had no sooner settled himself comfortably in a hotel at Santa Catalina Island than Maisie Morrison rang up Julia.

"Julia," she said, "where is Mr. Pritchard?"

"The dear Lor'd only knows, Miss Morrison."

"I must know where a telegram can reach him, Julia. Mr. Pritchard did not tell his secretary where he was going, so it could not have been a business trip. Put Graves on the line."

Graves, summoned from the garage, informed Maisie that he had driven Mr. Pritchard to the Southern Pacific depot. There he had heard his employer direct a

Keep Musterole on the bath-room shelf

Years ago the old-fashioned mustard plaster was the favorite remedy for rheumatism, lumbago, colds on the chest and sore throat.

It did the work all right, but it was sticky and messy to apply and my how it did burn and blister!

The little white jar of Musterole has taken the place of the stern old mustard plaster.

Keep this soothing ointment on your bathroom shelf and bring it out at the first cough or snuffle, at rheumatism's first warning tingle.

Made from pure oil of mustard, with the blister and sting taken out, Musterole penetrates the skin and goes right down to the seat of the trouble. To Mothers: Musterole is now made in milder form for babies and small children. Ask for Children's Musterole.

35c and 65c jars and tubes; hospital size, \$3. The Musterole Co., Cleveland, Ohio



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Order today,
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porter to stow his baggage in a compartment. Included in this impedimenta had been a case of fishing rods and a sketching outfit. Graves had noted that his employer had not taken a creel with him, hence he opined that if any fishing was to be done it would be sea fishing—and the boss had always had a weakness for Santa Catalina.

When Dan Pritchard came in from fishing that first day he found a telegram in his box at the hotel. It was from Maisie and read:

Something has jarred Uncle John dreadfully. He is at home ill, but mentally, not physically. Better assure yourself that everything is quite right at the office. Would return immediately if I were you, although when you do you need not bother to call on me unless you feel you really ought to.

Maisie

Within the hour Dan Pritchard had chartered a seaplane and was flying north. About ten o'clock that night the plane swooped down in the moonlight and landed him at Harbor View; within half an hour he was ringing the door-bell of John Casson's home.

"Take me immediately to Mr. Casson's room," he ordered the butler who admitted him. "It will not be necessary to announce me."

The man eyed him sympathetically and silently led the way upstairs. Casson was not in bed. He was seated on a divan in his wife's upstairs sitting room, staring dully into a small grate fire. From her seat across the room his wife watched him furtively.

"Good evening, Mrs. Casson. Good evening, Mr. Casson," Dan greeted them. "What's gone wrong, Mr. Casson?"

The old dandy looked up, frightened. Dan could have sworn he shuddered. "I'd rather not discuss the matter tonight, Pritchard," he parried. "I'm not well."

"I'm sorry for that, sir. What appears to be the matter with you? Where do you feel ill? Have you eaten something that didn't agree with you or—"

"He has," Mrs. Casson interrupted bitterly. "He's been on a diet of high-priced rice for the past several weeks and it has made him ill. John, do not evade Dan's query. He is equally interested with you in this matter. Tell him what happened the day he left town."

"Well, Pritchard, my boy," old Casson quavered, "the rice market has gone to glory. It's down to five cents and every rice dealer in this city is a bankrupt."

"Do you include Casson and Pritchard in the cataclysm?"

Casson nodded slowly and suddenly commenced to weep.

"But we sold our rice—"

"I know we did—on sixty days. Now the people we have sold it to are wiped out and cannot pay for it. The Cubans are responsible. They deliberately wrecked the market. Over night they made up their minds they had rice enough. The *cargadores* went on strike and refused to handle any more rice. The port of Havana is glutted with rice. It's on every dock and on every barge. They jammed the docks with it and loaded all the barges and then quit. Now the rice is being rained on, the ships that brought it are lying under heavy demurrage because



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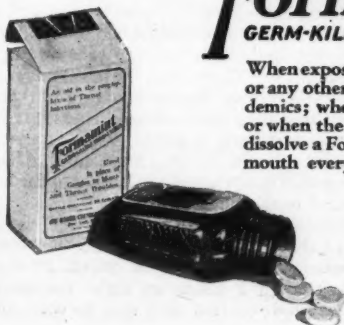
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they cannot get discharged; the rice brokers and wholesalers have treacherously refused to accept delivery on bona fide orders because the Havana market broke immediately when some frightened owners of cargoes cut their prices in order to unload at any price. Panic, I tell you—worst rice panic imaginable. Rice was up to twenty-one cents and over night it broke to five cents."

Dan sat down. This was exactly what he had feared might happen. The war was ended, but profiteers, still hungry for exorbitant gains, had put the screws on rice, the staple food of Cuba. They had cornered the crop there, such as it was, and the crop that year had been meager. Then they had filled Havana harbor with ships loaded with Oriental rice and had steadily jacked the price up to the point of saturation. And then the Cubans, maddened at this brutal and perfectly legal form of brigandage, had sprung their coup and, over night, had smashed their oppressors by the very simple method of refusing to handle longer the commodity which was so necessary to their existence.

They knew they could get rice when they needed it, and get it at their price. These ships had brought rice to Havana; now that Havana would not accept it or handle it, where could another ready and highly profitable market be found? And would these ships, chafing at the delay, agree to go elsewhere with their cargoes, save at a prohibitive freight rate? Rice freights from the Orient would collapse now, and that collapse would be followed by a debacle in other lines.

In a flash Dan saw that the post-war slump had started—an economic avalanche, traveling swiftly toward bankruptcy and ruin. "I see," he said quietly. "Beautiful work, beautiful. Three cheers for the Cubans. I didn't think they were up to a brilliant stroke like that. And now you're cussing them out, Mr. Casson, because they refused to let the rice bandits take the food out of their mouths. Well, you deserve this, Mr. Casson, but I'll be hanged if I do. You dragged me into this without my knowledge or consent—you silly, egotistical, brainless idiot—Mrs. Casson, I forgot you were present. I crave your pardon and I shall not again offend. I—I think—I shall—sit down."

He did, looking quite white and strained. His eyes burned like live coals. "Well, Mr. Casson," he said presently, "suppose we start in at the beginning. To begin with, we had half a million bags of California rice stored in warehouses here and there, and you hypothecated the warehouse receipts and bought Philippine and Chinese rice. Well, we sold our rice in warehouse at a huge profit, half cash, balance in ninety days. How about Banning and Company, who bought it?"

"The chief clerk telephoned me today that they had filed a petition of voluntary bankruptcy. They must be cleaned out because Banning blew his brains out an hour after filing the petition. He had half a million dollars' worth of life insurance, without an anti-suicide clause in it. His family will doubtless get that. I suppose he wanted to do the decent thing."

"Well," said Dan, "lucky for us I sold that Shanghai rice, ex. steamer Chinook, for cash. You raved at my idiocy when I made an eight thousand dollar profit on that deal and accused me



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of throwing away a potential profit of a quarter of a million dollars. As a matter of fact, I threw away a potential loss of about a million dollars. We'll take a loss of more than a dollar a bag on that million bags of California rice, however. I'll tell 'em you're a smart business man, Mr. Casson. Well, how about that eight thousand tons at Manila—the lot we sold to Katsuma and Co., at the market, against sight draft with bill of lading attached, payable at the Philippine National Bank?"

"Our Manila agent cabled that the bank had refused to honor the documents. I called up Katsuma and tried to get him to do something about providing funds or a credit to meet that draft, but he wouldn't or couldn't——"

"Katsuma didn't want to. He was up to the usual Jap trick—running out from a losing game. They never stand for their beating. You made him a price, f. o. b. Havana, that included cost, insurance and freight, did you not?"

Old Casson nodded miserably.

"Well, he got a notion that shipping rice to Havana was apt to lead to great grief, so he just didn't meet that draft. That keeps the owners of the Malayan out of their freight money and the chances are they will not permit the vessel to sail until the freight is paid. Did they come back on us for the freight?"

"They did. I paid it, and the Malayan is at sea with a cargo of eight thousand tons of rice fully insured but not paid for. It is going to cost us eighteen cents a pound to deliver that rice in Havana, and when it gets there we cannot deliver it. If we do it will be worth what we can get for it—say three to five cents—and the demurrage on the Malayan will be two thousand dollars a day. Of course we have a suit against Katsuma and Co., for breach of contract, but in the meantime we have to pay for the rice and I've given a ninety day draft on London for that——"

"When it comes due we will not be able to meet it," Dan said, dully. "The Katsuma assets are already nicely sequestered. You monumental jackass! Why didn't you sue and attack their bank account, everything they have, quietly and without notice, the instant you learned they had repudiated their contract?"

"That would be a great deal like locking the stable door after the horse had been stolen, wouldn't it, Pritchard?"

Dan nodded. This was the first bright thing he could remember Casson having said in years. Yes, the wily Orientals had seen the storm gathering and had fled to their cyclone cellar, caring not a whit what happened to others, to their own business honor, to their business, provided their capital remained intact. They could always organize again under a new name.

"Well, we've been sent to the cleaners, Mr. Casson. You have succeeded magnificently despite all I could do to thwart you. You have made a hiatus of your own life and mine. You've smashed your wife and Maisie. You are drowning, I tried to save you and you nulled me under with you. Well, I don't know what you intend doing with your private fortune—if you have any, which I doubt—but I have assets close to two million dollars and our creditors can have them. As your partner I am jointly and severally responsible. If



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the Chinaman for the very purpose of ordering one . . . Strange, he thought, how Soeey Wan could understand him without a blueprint and directions for using.

"Soeey Wan, I'm all through. I have gone broke."

"All the way?" Soeey Wan's voice cooed like a flute.

"All the way and back, Soeey Wan. I'm done. You'll have to leave me now and go back to China. I can't afford to pay you your wages any more."

"To hell with wages!" Soeey Wan, for the first time in his life, was genuinely angry, disgusted and humiliated. His eyes showed it, his wrinkled lower lip twisted and revealed his yellow fangs, his voice reeked with the very soul of profanity as he rasped out a few words in Chinese. Then: "Big fool, wha' for you talkum money to Soeey Wan?"

"You know very well I didn't mean to offend you, you old idol," Dan protested. "I spoke the truth. I am broke, utterly smashed."

"Shut up!" screeched Soeey Wan. "Wha' for you all time tellum lie?"

He set down untasted the highball he had planned to drink in profound sympathy with his adored boss and left the room.

"Soeey Wan, come back here!" Dan ordered.

Soeey Wan's voice rose in a shriek like the bull fiddle of his native land. "Shut up! Shut up! You klazy fool, wha's mallah you? You no bloke. You bet. No can do."

Dan sighed and sipped his highball. At the same moment Tamea slid out from under a dark afghan on a divan in the far corner of the room. She had fallen asleep there and, unknown to Soeey Wan and Dan, had been listening to their conversation. Swiftly she crossed the room to him now; as he rose to greet her she put her arms around his neck and drew his head down until his cheek caressed hers. Thus she held him for a long time, in silence, save for the plainly discernable, regular beat of her heart. Then: "Poor boy! You are hurt? But yes, I know it."

He nodded. "Smashed," he murmured. "All my money gone. Ruined."

Tamea's glance went past his ear and rested on Soeey Wan standing in the doorway, a large red lacquered box in his arms. She shook her head at him ever so slightly and like a yellow wraith he faded back into the hall.

"Ruined?" Tamea queried. "Has my lord, then, parted with his honor?"

"No, no, not that," he cried brokenly. "Nobody will think that of me. I will pay, but it will take all I have to do it, and when they have finished with me I shall have nothing left wherewith to make a new start. But never mind, Tamea. I'm not whipped. Just dazed, not down for the count. I'll come back."

He could feel the little chuckle of mirth that rippled through the lithe body pressed so close against him. "So?" she declared with her golden little laugh, "it is only a matter of money. And yet my lord is shaken like a coco-palm in the monsoon. Silly, silly white man. He does not know that I have money and that all of it is his." She drew his head around and kissed him on the lips; he



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trembled with the knowledge of her tremendous sweetness. "You will take my money and let me see you smile again, Dan Pritchard," she commanded.

"No, no, darling. I couldn't do that—ever. Please do not ask me to."

"But why, dear one?"

"Then indeed would I be parting with my honor."

"What madness! Is it because I am not your wife? Well, we will be married quickly and then—"

"No," he protested. "I tell you it is impossible. I'll never be able to repay the debt of your asking me to take your money, but—I shall never, never take one penny of it. I couldn't."

"But after we are married—"

"Never. I am your guardian. Your father gave you to me because he had faith in my manhood, he believed me to be a gentleman. You will not understand because your love blinds you, Tamea, but the white men of my world have a code and we must never break it."

"Oh," said Tamea softly and her eyes filled with tears. "Of what use is money save to buy happiness? When a man takes a woman to wife does he not take all she has—all of her love, all of her wealth, all of her faith? Is she not to be the mother of his children? You are right, dear one. I could never understand your white man's code."

"Some day you will, honey. Kiss me good night and run along to your room, child. I am unhappy tonight and when I am unhappy I have a desire to be alone. I wish to think."

She kissed him and went upstairs obediently; as she paused on the first landing and gazed down into the hall she saw Sooeey Wan slide noiselessly into the living room, the red lacquered box clasped under his arm. Tamea stood there wondering—and then to her ears came distinctly the sound of money clinking merrily.

Tamea came back downstairs and peered around the jamb of the door into the living room. Sooeey Wan was on his knees beside the red lacquered box with both hands tossing out on the carpet hundreds of gold pieces, bales of yellow-backed bills and large, fat, heavy Manila envelopes.

"You count 'em, Missa Dan," he begged, when the box was empty. And Dan Pritchard, wondering, knelt beside Sooeey Wan and counted long and in silence, making many notations on a piece of paper. And Tamea, watching, presently was aware that Sooeey Wan, who trusted in no banks, had, in his forty odd years in the United States, accumulated in that red lacquered box a fortune of two hundred and nineteen thousand four hundred and nine dollars and eighty cents in cash and bonds.

"Sooeey Wan," said Dan Pritchard, "do you cook for me by day and rob people by night?"

Sooeey Wan cackled merrily. "Oh, your papa always pay me big money—hund'ed, hund'ed fifty dolla month—and Sooeey Wan no spend velly much. But Sooeey Wan play poker velly nice, velly lucky fan tan and pi gow, and bimeby I ketchum one cousin. Cousin no money hab got but him know all about raisee vegetable. You know, Missa Dan, ketchum farm up on Sacramento liver. So Sooeey Wan



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makee partner with cousin and raisee early spud, ketchum spallaglass, ketchum watermelon, p'etty soon ketchum land, p'etty soon ketchum more land. Velly easy. Boss, you likee Sooeey Wan sellee lanch on Sacramento liver, can do. Sure. Sellee that land plenty quick, ketchum thousand dollar for one acre, have got thlee hund'ed acre. You likee, Missa Dan, I sell for you. Sooeey Wan no ketchum son, no ketchum wife, no ketchum papa, no ketchum mama, no ketchum nobody but Missa Dan. Missa Dan allee same Sooeey Wan's boy. Eh? My boy losee money, Sooeey Wan no loosum. Long time ago Sooeey Wan talkee your father. Your father say: 'Sooeey, my partner, Missa Casson no good. Heap damn fool.' All light, I watchum."

He came close to Dan and rested his yellow old claw of a hand on the beloved shoulder.

"Boy," he said, "Sooeey Wan savum all for you. You takee, you look out for Sooeey Wan, givee little money for play China lottery, givee loom, givee job, tha's all light. Sooeey Wan likee this house. Likee live here, likee die here, then you send Sooeey Wan back to China, keepee land on Sacramento liver, keepee money, mally lady queen and have many son. I think that plenty good for my boy. Sooeey Wan velly old man," he continued pleadingly. "No can live all time. Sure you takee, boy. Then you play lone hand in office. Old man Casson no damn good." He shrugged optimistically. "Bimeby you ketchum all your money back."

Dan Pritchard thrust out his long arms and his fingers closed round Sooeey Wan's neck. "No," he said, "I'm not broke. I never was broke, and I never will be broke while you and Tamea live. Thank God for you both! I couldn't take her money, Sooeey Wan, but I will take yours—later, when I need it. I'll make you a partner in my reorganized business." His fingers tightened around the old servant's throat. "You old yellow devil!" he said and shook Sooeey Wan vigorously. "We understand each other, I think. God bless you and bring you to some sort of Oriental heaven, you golden-hearted old heathen."

Sooeey Wan took up his untasted highball. "Hullah for Hell!" he cackled, tossed off the drink, gathered up his fortune and departed for his room, chuckling like a malevolent old gnome.

Dan Pritchard sat down in the living room, and wept. He was a bit of a sentimentalist. About one o'clock in the morning he went up to bed.

At two o'clock Sooeey Wan was awakened by a rapping at his door. He crawled out of bed, opened the door an inch and found Tamea outside.

"Wha's mallah?" he growled.

"Sooeey Wan, please loan me five hundred dollars—now," Tamea pleaded. "Dan Pritchard will pay you back."

"Wha' for you want money now?" Sooeey Wan demanded suspiciously.

"You are a servant," Tamea reminded him. "You should not ask questions. If you do not desire to oblige me I will make Dan Pritchard send you away from this house."

Sooeey Wan wilted, dug around in his red lacquered box and handed Tamea five hundred dollars. Then he went back to bed to think it over. As for Tamea, ten



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minutes later she let herself out the front door very quietly. She carried her accordion and a small suitcase which she had appropriated from Julia.

A taxicab cruised down Pacific Avenue after having deposited a bibulous gentleman in the arms of a sleepy butler. With an eye single to business the driver pulled over to the curb and hailed Tamea.

"Ride, Miss?"

"Take me to the place where the ships may be found," she ordered, and climbed in. At Clay Street wharf, just north of the Ferry building, she got out and walked along the waterside, north. At that hour the Embarcadero was deserted, save for an occasional watchman at a dock head, and to their curious glances Tamea paid no heed. She stumbled blindly on, questing like a homecoming lost dog, and presently she found that which she sought. It was the unmistakable odor of copra and it brought Tamea to a little hundred and thirty foot trading schooner that lay chafing her blistered sides against the bulkhead at the foot of Pacific Street. Uninvited, Tamea stepped aboard, sat down on the hatch coaming and waited for dawn. With the dawn came a gasoline tug and bumped alongside the schooner. Then men came on deck and to them Tamea spoke in a language they could understand. The master came, stood before her and gazed upon her curiously.

"Who are you, young lady," he said presently, "and what do you want?"

"I am the daughter of Gaston Larrieau, master of the schooner Moorea. My father is dead. My name is Tamea and I am weary of this white man's land. My heart aches for my own people and I would go back to them. I have money to pay for my passage. I would go to Riva."

"I have no passenger license, child, but your father was my friend. If you can stand us, we can stand you. There will be no charge for the passage. We are towing out this morning with the tide and our first port of call is Tahiti. Go below, girl, and the cook will give you breakfast."

As the sun was rising back of Mount Diablo the launch cast the little schooner adrift off the Golden Gate and the Kanaka sailors, chanting a hymn, ran up her headsails. As they filled Tamea came out of the cabin and looked again upon that ochertinted coast-line, watched again the bizarre painted gasoline trawlers of the Mediterranean fishermen put out for the Cordelia banks. Then the mainsail went up and the schooner heeled gently over, took a bone in her teeth and headed south.

"It is best to leave him thus," the girl murmured. "He does not love me and he never will. I would not stay to afflict him. What he would not accept from me he accepted from a servant. Then I knew!" She lifted her golden voice and sang "Aloha," the Hawaiian song of farewell.

For Tamea, Queen of Riva, was of royal blood, and when the gods rained blows upon her she could take them smiling!

CHAPTER XXII

THAT morning Dan was awakened at seven o'clock by an unusually forcible rapping at his door and the voice of Julia crying agitatedly: "Misther Pritchard! Misther Pritchard, sor. Wake up, sor."

"What's the matter, Julia?"

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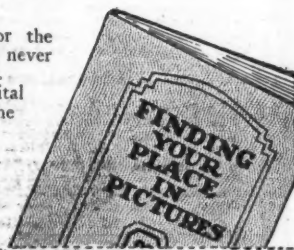
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"Sure, Tammy's gone, sor." Julia's voice rose in the keen, that peculiar crescendo which the Irish affect in moments of grief and terror. It frightened Dan.

"Gone where?" he cried.

"God help us, sorra wan o' me knows, sor."

"How do you know she has gone?"

"She took my suitcase and some of her new clothes, sor, an' her bed has not been slept in. Soocy Wan says she borrowed five hundred dollars from him at two o'clock this morning—"

"Send Soocy Wan up immediately, Julia, and quit that confounded funeral shrilling."

At his command, the door opened and Soocy Wan slid into the room noiselessly on slippered feet. It was apparent to Dan that he had been lurking just outside the door while Julia broke the tidings of ill news to their master. The old cook's head hung low and his face was drawn in fear and misery.

"Well?" Dan demanded.

"Soocy Wan klazy," the Chinaman replied huskily. "Lady queen come knock my room, say wanchee fi' hund'ed dollah. I say 'Wha' for you wanchee fi' hund'ed dollah?' Lady queen makum eyes allee same tomcat in the dark; lady queen say velly snappy: 'Soocy Wan, wha' for you talkee me questions? You servant. Makum too muchee talkee, I tellum Missa Dan, him fire you heap quick.' So then Soocy Wan think, 'Maybe lady queen likee buy present for Missa Dan, makum big suplise,' so Soocy Wan give lady queen fi' hund'ed dollah. Lady queen velly nice, bimeby lady queen allee same my boss, Soocy Wan hate to lefuss little favor."

Dan nodded understandingly. "You are forgiven, Soocy Wan. There's only one fault to be found with you, and if you were a white man I couldn't find that. You're too devilish loyal. Forget about it, old ruin. Don't blame yourself." He leaped out of bed, opened the door a couple of inches and spied Julia, very ruddy and moist of countenance, out in the hall. "Somewhere in this house, Julia, you will find a letter which Tamea has left for me. Bring it to me," he ordered.

Within five minutes Julia returned with the letter, which she had found on the desk in Dan's home office downstairs. With fingers that trembled a little Dan tore the envelope and read:

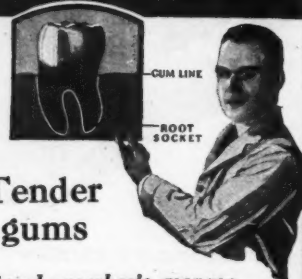
My dear one:

I leave you. I do this because I love you. Last night I learned that which yesterday I would not have thought true. You do not love me. You are ashamed of me, and it is because I am half Kanaka. In love I offered you all that I possess and you would not accept because you felt that to accept my money obligated you to accept me. But from your Chinese servant you did not hesitate to accept what you refused from me. Perhaps this was because he has more than I. Well, there shall be no argument—only this much I would say: I am perhaps, even with my mixed blood, above a Chinaman.

Because I can never be happy in this land, I return to my own people. They will always understand me, but your people never will. They would never accept me. Mellenger was right. There is a wise man and a true friend. When he spoke words of truth and wisdom I hated him for them—and I have hurt him. Please say to him that I am very sorry and would he might think better of me than he does. I bear no

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malice toward him now, for he tried to save us both. As for my money, in Riva I shall not require it, so, because I love you, I give it to you. I would that you shall be very happy. Please pay to Soovey Wan the five hundred dollars I begged of him, and sometimes, when you are not too busy and, perhaps, after you have married Maisie, think of one who would die rather than cause you one minute of sorrow.

Your

Tamea

Dan read and reread the letter, while Soovey Wan eyed him from beneath lowered lids. "Well, she's gone," the master said presently.

"Oh, pretty soon I think come back," Soovey Wan urged hopefully.

"Not Tamea. She isn't the quitting kind, and I have foolishly broken her child's heart. She—she—just couldn't understand, and I was too crushed to explain in detail . . . Well, I think I shall find her before she can get out of the city. Buck up, Soovey Wan! Everything will come out all right."

Soovey Wan's face expanded in a glad smile. He faded from the room as noiselessly as he had entered, and a moment later Dan heard his harsh voice reproving Julia for her weakness in the face of disaster.

When Dan was alone he sat down on the edge of the bed to think. He had no reason to doubt Tamea's statement that she was returning to Riva, and he knew the very schooner upon which she would, doubtless, endeavor to secure passage. Ten days previous she had dropped in on him at the office just as he was about to leave it to visit one of the firm's vessels lying at the Sea Wall. Thinking she might find a tour of the waterfront mildly interesting, Dan had invited her to accompany him, and as they were returning Tamea's sharp eyes had read the name "Pelorus" on the stern of a South Sea trading schooner moored at Pacific Street bulkhead. Instantly she had cried out that she knew that boat; once it had come to Riva. She begged Dan to go aboard with her and he had acceded to her request. The Pelorus had a *hapahaole* (half white) mate and a crew of Samoans, but her white master was not aboard. Tamea had conversed with the crew in one of the numerous island dialects with which she was conversant, and Dan had observed that this casual touch with her old life had afforded the girl a very noticeable pleasure.

"That's the lead to follow," he soliloquized, and taking down the telephone he called the Meigs Wharf lookout of the Merchants' Exchange, of which Casson & Pritchard were members.

"Dan Pritchard speaking," he announced. "What do you know about the schooner Pelorus?"

"She towed out with the tide at dawn this morning, Mr. Pritchard."

"What vessel did the towing?"

"Crowley gasoline tug Number Thirty-four. The tug is just passing the wharf now, on her way back to her berth."

"Thank you," said Dan Pritchard, and hung up. Half an hour later he called Crowley's Boat House and asked for the master of Tug Number Thirty-four. After some delay the man he sought came on the telephone and Dan introduced himself.

"You towed the Pelorus out this morning," he continued. "Did you happen to observe

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whether or not she had a passenger?"

"I'll say I did, Mr. Pritchard. There was a young lady aboard."

"What sort of a young lady?"

"About twenty, I should say. A peach. Looked as if she might have a dash of island blood in her. She was sitting on the main hatch coaming when I bumped alongside this morning, and she had been crying. She had a black suitcase and an accordion with her."

"Thank you very much. Good morning."

So she had caught the Pelorus and was southward bound! Dan reflected, sadly humorous, that nothing is lost if you know where it is. Also it occurred to him that trouble always arrives in carload lots. Very heavy of heart, he bathed, shaved and breakfasted; not once during these mechanical operations did his mind revert to the tragedy of Casson & Pritchard. His private tragedy completely overwhelmed him; his real loss had been Tamea!

Arrived at his office, he called up the agents of the Pelorus and verified his suspicion that the vessel was not equipped with wireless. Next he called up the San Francisco Yacht Club at Sausalito and made inquiry for the fastest motor cruiser on the bay, and when he had located one that could do fifteen miles an hour he chartered it and by ten o'clock was splashing out through the Golden Gate in pursuit of the Pelorus. She was not visible, but Dan had with him the port captain of Casson & Pritchard, who laid out the course for Tahiti and headed the cruiser away on it. Once clear of the Heads, however, the futility of pursuit began to dawn even upon the altruistic Dan.

"The Pelorus was originally a yacht," the port captain informed him. "I've looked her up in Lloyd's Register. I remember her very well the year she came out here from the Great Lakes. It was during the war when bottoms were scarce. When she was sold, the new owners ripped the mahogany heart out of her, and rebuilt her into a trader, but that didn't alter her lines any, and she was built to show speed in a breeze of wind. She has a thirty-five mile northwest breeze on her quarter, and if she isn't rambling with a bone in her teeth then I never went to sea. Right now she's out-footing this cruiser. She'll log two hundred and fifty miles a day while this breeze holds, and at this season of the year it ought to hold until the Pelorus runs into the trades. You haven't got sufficient gasoline tankage on this craft to enable you to get back to port, even if you should overhaul the Pelorus in, say three hundred miles."

They returned to port. Once more in his office, Dan looked up the schedule of sailings for the Australian steamers that made Tahiti one of their ports of call, and discovered that the next steamer would not leave for two weeks.

"Very well," Dan decided. "I'll devote the ensuing two weeks to untangling the affairs of Casson and Pritchard. Praise be, we've just closed the books and our records and appraisals are all in perfect shape for the receiver. I shall petition for a receiver and then I'll leave the wreck for him to clean up. I'll turn over everything I have to him; then I shall take Tamea's money to her. Soocy Wan and I will take passage on the next steamer and there is a splendid possibility that we may beat the



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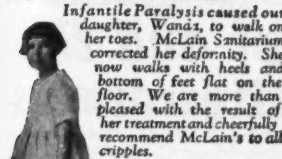
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Pelorus to Tahiti. If we do I shall marry Tamea there and end my days in the Islands. I'm sick of civilization anyhow. I want a change—I want to be simple and natural, to be free of the competition of existence. Down there nobody will wonder why I have married Tamea. Convention does not exist, nor foolish tradition nor social codes—and I can paint landscapes to my heart's content."

His decision, arrived at so suddenly, was peculiarly inexorable. Mentally, he had come to the jumping-off place. His motto now was, "The Devil take everything—including me." The rewards to be gleaned from the struggle that faced him in his white civilization were scarcely commensurate with the effort required, and a sudden passionate yearning had seized Dan Pritchard to chuck it all, to drift with the tide, to sample life in its elemental phases, to be happy in a land where all of the rules of existence were reversed . . . A man lived but once and he was a long time dead . . . and Dan wanted Tamea . . . ah, how ardently he desired her and how lonely and desolate would be his life without her. Civilization demands much of repression, since civilized man, like the domestic dog, still retains the instincts of his primitive ancestors; and Dan was weary of repression. Hang it, he would go on the loose! He would take the gifts that the gods provided and cease to worry over the opinions of people whose sole claim to his consideration lay in the fact that they were white and dwelled in his world.

In all his life Dan had never arrived at a decision that he grasped more tenaciously, or which yielded him a greater measure of comfort. A subconscious appeal permeated the thought of freedom as a phrase runs through an opera. Free! He was going to be free! He was a volatile spirit and he had been corked too long; the collapse of Casson & Pritchard offered him a splendid excuse for pulling the cork, and by all the gods, Christian and pagan, he would pull it. That was the idea! Chuck it, chuck it all and then walk out of the picture without even a word of farewell to his world . . . No, he would even refuse to say good-by to Mark Mellenger. Mel would block the plan with unanswerable and unassailable arguments, while as for Maisie . . .

He dismissed thoughts of Maisie. Resolutely he refused to entertain them. They hurt him, smothered his heart . . . He telephoned his attorney, Henderson.

"Henderson," he said very calmly, "Casson and Pritchard are bankrupt and I've taken over the wreck. I think I'll pay out, but even if I do I shall quit. Please come down in the morning and we will make out an application to the District Court to have a receiver appointed . . . Nine o'clock? . . . Thank you."

Dan worked fast. Metaphorically speaking, during the next ten days he dumped all he possessed, with the exception of a few personal effects, into the lap of the receiver. "Here it is," he declared. "Spread it equitably among the creditors, and if it isn't enough tell the idiots to charge the deficit to profit and loss. I've worried my last worry over the foolish things men set their hearts upon."

He discharged Julia and Graves, boarded up the doors and windows of his home and, accompanied by Soey Wan, boarded the steamer Aorangi for Tahiti.

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The passage was uneventful, the passengers uninteresting, and Dan spent all of his days and half of his nights in a steamer chair in the lee of the funnel, just staring at the sea and thinking. Sooley Wan, who occupied a first-class cabin, for which Dan had purchased two tickets, lolled beside him and smoked innumerable cigarettes. He spoke when he was spoken to, and when he thought Dan needed a change he steered his honored boss into the smoking room and engaged him in wordless games of dominoes. In the fullness of time they came to Tahiti, and there, swinging at her moorings in the little harbor, Dan saw the schooner Pelorus. He was aboard her with Sooley Wan ten minutes after the port officers had given the steamer pratique.

Her captain sat on the poop deck, under an awning, drinking champagne without ice. "Mr. Daniel Pritchard, I opine," he greeted Dan. "And unless my opining machine is out of order this bright day, you are accompanied by none other than the Chinese person who spilled the beans. Be seated, both of you. Champagne? Haven't any ice. Sorry. Well, Tamea is not in Tahiti."

Dan sat down, but Sooley Wan stood respectfully in back of him.

"My name is Hackett," the skipper continued. "I'm high, low and Jack in the game aboard this little packet. Old Gaston was a good friend of mine. Fact is, I owe him eighty dollars of a gambling debt. Tried to pay the girl, but she wouldn't accept it."

"Tamea is—"

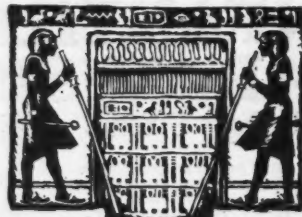
"Tamea is—or rather was—as nice a girl when she left the Pelorus as she was when she came aboard, if that's the thought in the back of your head. I wasn't fixed to receive a lady passenger, but to such as I had she was welcome and no questions asked."

"Oh, well, you didn't have to ask Tamea many questions. She was wistful for the sight of someone who talked her language, somebody who could understand."

Captain Hackett nodded and motioned to his steward to get glasses. "After we were out about a week she told me all about everything," he admitted. "I told her I thought she had made a big mistake, but she wouldn't believe me. I assured her you would follow on the very next passenger steamer in the hope of overhauling her here, and I urged her to stay. But she wouldn't. She's taken a passage on the Doris Crane—sailed four days ago—and it is not likely you can pick up the Doris by wireless from the Aorangi. She's too far away by now, and besides she wouldn't turn back just to please Tamea. She gave the skipper five hundred dollars and promised him the Riva trade to drop her off at home."

"I must get to Riva," said Dan. "I am her guardian—I have all the funds and bonds her father left her, and whether or not she desires this fortune, I am going to return it to her. Can you tell me, Captain, the quickest way to get to Riva?"

The master of the Pelorus smiled amiably. "Can that. I've waited here four days to tell you. You're going to charter the fast and commodious schooner Pelorus for the exclusive use of yourself and yon John Chinaman, and for in consideration of the sum of one thousand dollars and the privilege of three stops en route to pick up



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stress of wind and wave."

Sooey Wan climbed silently down off
the poop deck and went overside into
the boat in which he and Dan had come
aboard.

"He has gone for our baggage," Dan
explained. "We've traded. Hustle your
crew and stores aboard, break out your
mudhook and let's go about one minute
after Sooey Wan returns."

"You're a man after my own heart," the
skipper agreed heartily. "One thousand
dollars, please."

"Sooey Wan will give it to you when he
returns. Have you got bedbugs?"

"I'm proud to say we have not. Noth-
ing more annoying than cockroaches, and
if you don't like your berth you can sleep
on deck. Going to marry the girl, Mr.
Pritchard?"

"Certainly."

The skipper shrugged as who should say:
"Well, it's none of my business what
you do."

"You deprecate my decision," Dan
charged irritably.

"Not at all. It is merely that if I stood
in your shoes I wouldn't marry her. Why
should you? You don't have to. You'll
regret it if you bring her back to the United
States, because she'll never be truly happy
there. When you transplant these people
they die of homesickness. They're so far
behind our civilization they can never
catch up, and the effort wears them
and they die. They are children, I tell
you."

"I agree with you, Captain. But I am
not going to make the mistake of trans-
planting Tamea. I'm going to settle in
Riva with her and just naturally let her
rest of the world go by."

"It goes by very slowly down here under
the Line, my son. These islands are not
for white men—that is, your kind of white
man—unless you contemplate vegetating
and going to blazes, mentally, morally and
physically, before you're forty. The sun
does things to fair-haired and blue-eyed
men and women down in the latitude of
Riva. You will not be happy there, Mr.
Pritchard. One of these days a schooner
will drop in at Riva and when she does
you'll hear your white world calling,
and—you'll go, too. And when one
goes it is just as well to have no—legal—
appendages."

Dan was silent. He wanted to bash this
tropical philosopher over the head with a
belaying pin and cause him to stow forever
his insulting and impossible advice. But
—he reflected—if he did that he would be
delayed in getting to Riva and Tamea, and
he could not bear that her bruised heart
should ache one moment longer than
necessary.

Hackett read his thoughts.
"We will not discuss this subject again,
Mr. Pritchard," he said gently. "I have
said my say because I have felt it my duty
to do so. I have roved through these
islands some thirty years, and I know
what I know. Have a cigar? They're
genuine Sumatras."

Peter B. Kyne's story ends next
month—and that last instalment,
in the luring South Sea Isles, is
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SCHOOLS, (Continued from Page 184)
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